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# SOME BY-WAYS OF CALIFORNIA

CHARLES·F·CARTER

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**SOME BY-WAYS  
OF CALIFORNIA**







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# SOME BY-WAYS OF CALIFORNIA

By  
CHARLES FRANKLIN CARTER

SECOND EDITION

A Region of Solitude  
The Mojave Desert

WHITAKER & RAY WIGGIN CO.

SAN FRANCISCO

MCMXI

**A Region of Solitude  
The Mojave Desert**

(From a photograph)

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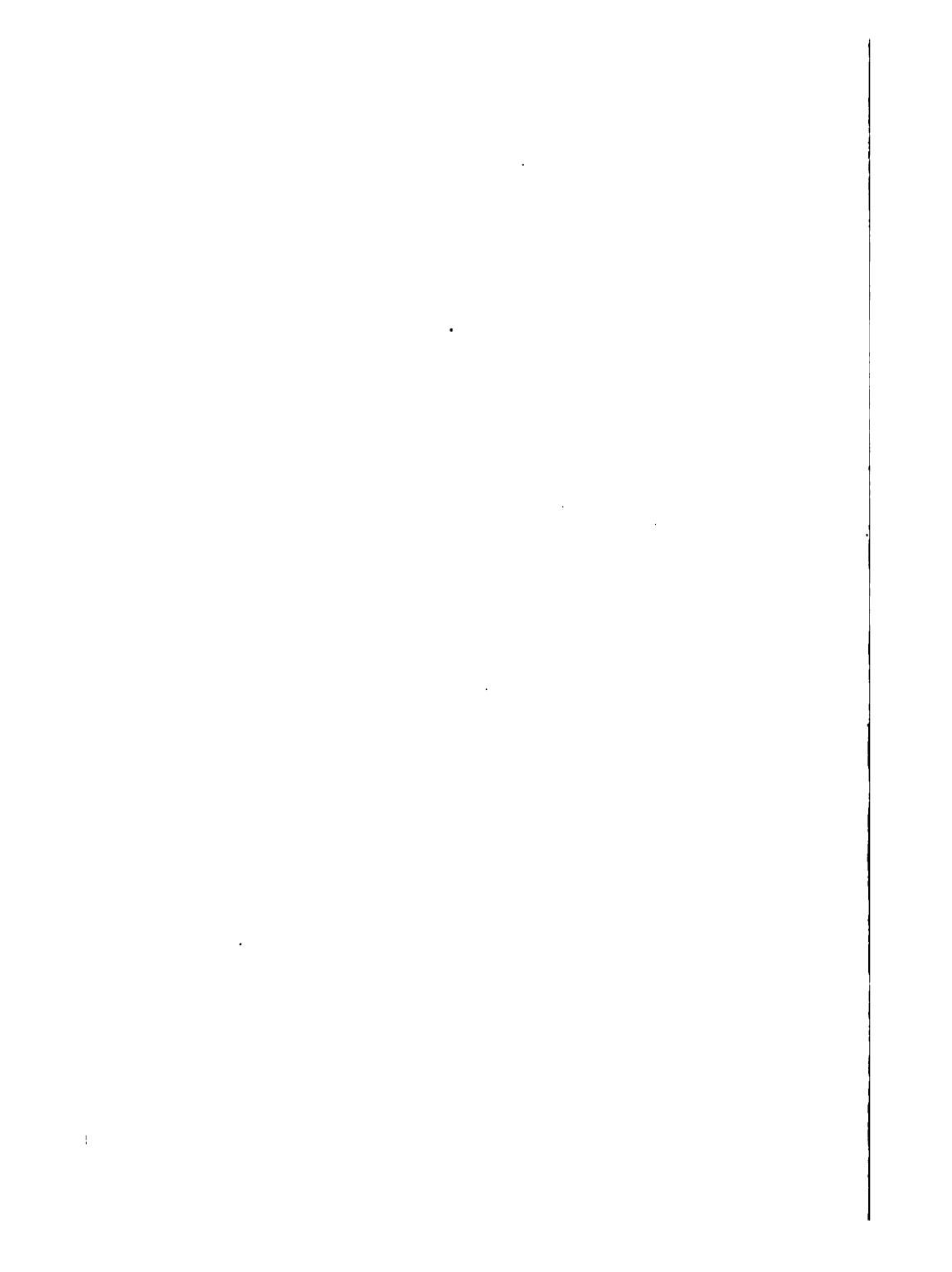
## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

In publishing a second edition of this little book the writer wishes to express his acknowledgments to the public for the kind reception accorded to the first edition, published by The Grafton Press, New York. It is with pleasure he has learned that these articles have brought attention to the places described, and he hopes a second edition will prove quite as acceptable. Notwithstanding the time elapsed since the original issue, conditions pertaining to all of the localities described remain very much the same. The railroad has not yet penetrated to Jolon or Pala or Pescadero, and they continue their tranquil existence unvexed by the turmoil of the outer world: the descriptions of these places are, therefore, quite as true to-day as they were at the time of the first publication.

A short article, "The Nightingale's Peer," has been added to the list of titles included in the first edition.

C. F. C.

April, 1911.



## PREFACE.

A glance at the table of contents of this little collection might lead one to think an undue proportion of the titles pertained to missions, and the towns or villages growing out of them. That a large number relate to those religious establishments is true, five of the articles being descriptive of towns of which each one had an old Franciscan mission for a nucleus; but that the space given to the missions is unduly disproportionate may be questioned. When we recollect that the missions were the earliest settlements in California, and that of the twenty-one religious establishments, fully three-fourths of the number grew eventually into towns of more or less importance—some of them becoming cities among the largest in the state—the number taken for description may not, after all, be too great. Yet the writer has selected those smaller and less well known settlements—some hardly as-

PREFACE.

piring to the dignity of villages—as retaining more of the Spanish atmosphere of former days.

The places described in the following pages are but a few from among the many as interesting which might be selected. Should these little descriptions induce the traveler to visit some of the by-ways of this section of our country, the writer will have attained his object.

C. F. C.

Waterbury, Connecticut, October 25, 1902.

## Some By-Ways of California

### Pala

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, a country comparatively new to the traveling public, contains many places seldom or never heard of by the tourist, rarely, perhaps never, visited by the sojourner of years in the state. Railroads are still few, and the great stretches of country yet untouched by this adjunct of modern civilisation, many; and as most tourists cannot tear themselves away from the beaten track of travel, these places are left in oblivion, to follow their own quiet life much as they have done for decades. This has been an unqualified blessing to the lover of the picturesque and to the seeker after bits of old time life and custom and architecture; for it is in just these spots, neglected by modern life and business, that the purest, least unchanged remains of former days are to be found. These spots—villages, or the merest settlements, as they may be—at the present time, are only remnants, small and insignificant; but they will be found to contain as

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much as, if not more than, all that remains of California's early life in the larger cities and towns; and that little will be in a far better state of preservation, if of the old architecture, or less contaminated by modern American life, if of the old customs; and each will be found set in its own proper and appropriate framework of environment.

Naturally, as in all places, east or west, left to one side when railroads are built, such settlements never become large—in fact, in the majority of cases, the result is that they are very apt to lose a good part of what little population they have. Southern California is no exception to this rule; although it is, perhaps, less marked; for nearly all the large towns were located on, or not far from, the coast, right on the path of the future lines of communication. But there are some places, historic and picturesque, not yet reached by the railroad, places that well repay the time and effort necessary to visit them. Pala is one of these, a place than which none more interesting can be found in the state.

To reach Pala from Oceanside, the easier and more usual, although the longer, way, requires a drive of twenty-four miles. A stage, so-called, carrying the mail, leaves Oceanside about mid-day three times a week, returning the alternate days. It is not the most comfortable vehicle in the world, and the tourist will find it far more agreeable to

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engage a private team and make the trip independently. In addition to the greater pleasure of the independent drive, this will be found the better way because it leaves one free to make an early start, allowing a return the same day; and, as there are no accommodations for travelers at Pala, to make the round trip in a single day will be imperative, unless some resident may be found willing to play the part of temporary host. An early start will thus be seen to be advisable, leaving, at the best, only a short time for Pala itself.

There is another way to get to Pala, which is from the north by way of Temecula. This has the advantage of being much shorter, (it is only ten miles between the two places); but, as this is not a stage route, and as it is much more hilly than is the other, and, again, as Temecula, although a railroad point, is not on the regular line of tourist travel, the advantage is, after all, more apparent than real.\*

Traveling along the coast between Capistrano and San Diego, whether by the railroad or driving on the highway, one has no conception of what the interior country waits to offer those who will make the trip thither. The coast scenery is satisfactorily beautiful, it is true; but to have seen the

\*This was the arrangement in 1895. The writer has heard that in 1899 the stage was no longer run from Oceanside, but from Temecula instead.

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coast in this part of the state does not, by a great deal, mean that one has become familiar with the country as a whole. Yet, now and again, tantalising glimpses of what lies beyond may be had, leading the thoughtful traveler to wonder if, after all, there be not as desirable spots in this region as the well-known and common places of interest of ordinary travel. Distant mountains, suggestive of charming valleys and *cañons* with their streams of purest water, form the background of much of the view; now and then, one passes by a break in the *mesa*, displaying a grove of trees running back as far as the eye can reach. It is these bits that have the greatest influence in inducing one to accept their silent invitation.

Oceanside is a small seaside resort, a remnant of what it was expected to become from the result of the "boom" in 1887. It still has its small quota of summer visitors; its still smaller number of lovers of the old times who stop over here for a day or two in order to make a pilgrimage to Mission San Luis Rey, only four miles distant. But the number who come to Oceanside to make the trip to Pala is so small as not to be worth the counting. And there the great mistake is made.

Anyone visiting Pala is to be congratulated on the happy conjunction of three most interesting features of the trip. In the first place, the country traversed is hardly excelled in this part of the

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state for beauty of natural landscape, made up of river, valley and mountain, wild and sylvan, much of it untouched by the hand of man; then one has Pala in prospect during the entire ride of twenty-four miles, and the prospect cannot make the reality disappointing. But the third feature of this trip, Mission San Luis Rey, is far the best, and one that should not be refused a separate visit, if possible; for there is so much to see here that it cannot be done satisfactorily or adequately on the same day the trip to Pala is made. The number of those who visit San Luis Rey is to those visiting Pala as ten to one (I believe I should be much nearer the truth if I said one hundred to one). Still, it is, perhaps, better to make the trip to Pala, having a glimpse of San Luis Rey on the way, (which is easily done, for the road passes directly in front of the mission) than to forego Pala entirely for the sake of a longer time to devote to the more important object of interest.

Mission San Luis Rey was founded in 1798, at the period of greatest activity in mission affairs in California. It was the last one of five which were started in that, and the preceding, year. Under the energetic and zealous direction of the famous father, Antonio Peyri, it reached, almost at a bound, a position at the head of the missions, leading all in number of neophytes, in wealth of land, cattle and produce, and in the size and grandeur of its

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buildings. In 1826, the mission had enrolled two thousand, eight hundred and sixty-nine neophytes, its greatest number, and far in excess of the next largest establishment. The extent of its land was correspondingly great, and the produce and income received from it commensurate with the mission's standing as the superior of all. This high position was due to the untiring, whole-souled efforts of Father Peyri, the head of the mission.

Father Peyri was born in Catalonia, Spain; he came to California from Mexico, in 1796. At first he was stationed at San Luis Obispo, but, on the founding of San Luis Rey, he was transferred to the new mission at its birth, and became its very life and soul. Here he spent practically the rest of his life, which was, as well, the life of the mission; for only when all hope of averting the fate of the missions was given up by everyone, did he leave the work of his hand and heart. In 1831 he left California, returning to Mexico, and, later, to his old home in Spain. It was a sad day for the mission when their loved and revered father left them. The story goes that Peyri was forced to leave secretly by night to escape the importunities of the neophytes who would have detained him, if necessary, by force. There was a cry of anguish from the entire mission when the *padre's* flight was discovered, the next morning. At once several hundred started on horseback for San

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Diego, where they found Peyri on board a ship just getting under way out of the harbor. Probably the neophytes had heard some rumors of the impending departure of their father and they determined to use all their eloquence to prevent that which, to them, must have looked like the end of all things; for, when Peyri left the mission, they, indeed, could not fail to realise what, before that occurred, had, probably, seemed to them a vague, far-distant change in the existing order of things.

But it was of no avail. Father Peyri, very likely, felt he had gone too far to change his plans, even had he desired to do so at that late hour. So he sailed away, praying, with streaming eyes, for the mission and its children he loved and had labored for so long. Had Peyri been endowed with greater strength of body, he would, very probably, have remained to undergo whatever the new régime might have in store for the missions; but he was too old and frail to cope successfully, and he felt that he could not bear the sight of the frustration of his life work, helpless as he knew he was to avert it. His, perhaps, was the wiser action, for nothing he could have done would have made the slightest difference in the result.

Nothing is known of Peyri's last days farther than that he made a visit to Rome, and may have died there. When he left his mission, he took two neophytes with him, whom, later, he placed in the

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Propaganda College at Rome, where they excited much interest; but they seem not to have been heard of in later days.

Excepting only the saint-like Serra, Padre Peyri is the most beloved and revered of all the Franciscans who served in California. He had but one thought, and that was the betterment of his spiritual children, and the bringing them into Christ's fold. The father is remembered, to-day, by a few old Indians who speak of him with the utmost reverence and affection. His memory remains like the sweet, delicate fragrance of an early wild flower.

One is amazed, at the first sight of the mission, to see the extent and magnitude of the buildings and ruins. In this respect, it is the most remarkable of all the missions, although, in the best days of both, it was excelled in beauty by Mission San Juan Capistrano. To pass through country almost deserted by human beings, settled only by the smallest hamlets, and to come, at last, to a group of buildings such as those at Mission San Luis Rey—buildings that would adorn and enhance the interest of any place, no matter how large or how rich in architectural beauty—causes the beholder to marvel at the indomitable energy of a single man who could produce such a result. It is almost incredible, and, indeed, would have been absolutely impossible, except at an amount of

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money not to be thought of by the missionaries, had not there been a practically unlimited number of workmen at the command of the father, and who, of course, were not paid for their time and labor. But granting this, think what the father and his few assistants had to contend with; think of the savage Indians, utterly ignorant of everything, requiring to be taught the simplest, most rudimentary things before they could work intelligently at the fabrication of the mission! That the father could have produced such a result with such, apparently, inadequate means increases one's amazement the more one thinks of this and examines the ruins. It is, indeed, only what was done at nearly all the missions; but, as San Luis Rey was the largest, so also was it established later than the other large missions, and reached its height of prosperous career in a much shorter time. The mission church now standing is supposed to be the one that was finished before the close of 1802, not five years after the birth of the mission itself, and in addition to the multiform cares pertaining to the building up of an establishment of this magnitude in what was hardly more than a wilderness. There seems to be no present knowledge of a later church building; and it is difficult to believe that, as Bancroft says, Father Peyri was not satisfied with it, and asked permission to build another. But nothing farther seems

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to be known concerning the matter. Every fact, every incident but reflects the more Father Peyri's undivided care for his mission.

There was, it is true, an element of luck in the wonderful early prosperity of Mission San Luis Rey, which must have helped considerably in bringing it to take the place at the head of the missions in size and wealth. By 1798, the year of the founding, there were missions already established from San Diego to San Francisco, with the resultant subjection of large numbers of the savages of the surrounding country. Consequently, when San Luis Rey was founded, not only was assistance from the missions near at hand to be obtained to enable it to make a more auspicious start in life; but the Indians of the neighborhood, although still gentiles, had, many of them, felt, in some measure, the influence of Missions San Diego and Capistrano. Yet their help, although it must have been appreciable, was more than offset by the great population reached in 1826. Surely, the number of converted savages—greater by nearly one thousand than the next largest mission—was not due wholly to the ground being partly broken.

The mission was built in the form of a huge square, with the domed church at one corner. The whole enclosed a *patio* in which was a fountain. The church is in the best state of preservation; in

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fact, was so little injured by time and neglect that its repair was a comparatively small matter. Much of the outside plastering has scaled off, showing the manner of construction, *adobe* faced with burnt brick. The altar end of the church suffered the greatest damage, and, at the time of my visit to the mission, in 1895, had not been repaired, although plans were under way to have it done shortly. Extending from the church's right, parallel with its front, there are the remains of a long cloistered row of buildings, now only in ruins.\*

A few arches at the church end, in good condition, give an idea of what the whole was like, seventy-five years ago. At that time, the mission must have been a most wonderful one, for size, architecture and beauty, built up, as it was, in what might almost be called the heart of the wilderness; with its lofty church at one corner, from which radiated rows of arches supported by large, square pillars; the whole of a dazzling white, making it the one dominant object in the view from every quarter and as far as the topography of the ground would allow it to be seen. Travelers of those days speak of it in the most glowing terms.

The remainder of the square formed by the buildings is in much delapidation; yet enough is

\*The writer speaks always of San Luis Rey as it was in 1895—he has not visited it since. This applies also to Pala, which he visited in the same year.

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left to show the extent of ground covered, and, in some spots, to give a good idea of the fine appearance the mission presented when at the meridian of its life and beauty, a most fair object in the surrounding landscape. Scattered about here and there in the vicinity of the mission are *adobe* walls enclosing pasture land. San Luis Rey had immense herds of sheep and cattle: in 1828, there were nearly twenty-nine thousand sheep in pasture, its greatest number, after which it began to decline; but the horses continued to increase for some time.

A few of the missions, particularly those established in the later days of mission history, like San Luis Rey, had a brief infancy and youth, reaching their maturity and the period of highest usefulness and greatest wealth in but few years; differing from the larger number, which had difficulties of all kinds to contend with and whose life was, in many cases, one of constant struggle and endeavor. But all the missions were alike in one respect—their end. Every one, without an exception, was killed, almost in a day, by the act of secularisation passed by the government. The final result took place in 1833. The first intention was to form *pueblos* from the missions, but only one—San Juan Capistrano, formed from the mission of that name—was an entire success. Las Flores was started with the Indians of San Luis

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Rey, but, as was the case with so many other *pueblos*, could not be called a success, although it, as well as the other *pueblos* in the south, had a longer life than those farther north. But the Indians, under the *pueblo* system, passed away, decreasing in numbers more rapidly than in the mission days—the inevitable result of all attempts to civilise the savage wherever he may be found. In 1844, there were only four hundred Indians at the ex-mission and the *pueblo* formed from it.

It is a great contrast between those days, three-quarters of a century ago, with their mission life, so mild and beneficent, when the aborigines were taught something of a more civilised and moral conduct, and the present condition of the mission. We know that the missions could not have continued to exist always as missions, for such a form of permanent, ecclesiastical government was out of the question; but it is a great pity that their early manner of life might not have been changed gradually, and merged into the only kind of religious influence possible at this late day. The change from the mission, and its autocratic life, to a mere parish church was too sudden and violent for many of the missions, although most of the larger and more prosperous of them, after much struggle and hardship, made the change and continue to the present time. San Luis Rey, however, the largest and finest, and the most extraor-

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dinary of the twenty-one in its wonderful life, seemed, like its beloved pastor, Father Peyri, (who fled the country rather than witness the death of his mission), to find the change at the time of secularisation too much to bear. It died completely, and, like so many of the smaller establishments, was deserted and left to the companionship of the bats and owls.

Died completely, truly, but not for all time. After fifty years of rest, lying peacefully in the golden sunshine of the long, warm summers, and washed by the gentle rains of winter, it has been called into a new life. On the 23d of May, 1893, the mission wakened to find itself once more a centre of usefulness and power for good in the country. On that day, the ex-mission became an ecclesiastical college for the education of candidates for the priesthood, and four youths from Mexico were invested with the habit of postulants in the new college. This great change was made possible, and brought about, by the remarkable zeal and authority of the Rev. J. J. O'Keefe, of Santa Barbara, who left his charge in that city to come here and begin his new work at the old mission. The task Father O'Keefe has set himself is little short of herculean; for it must be remembered there was not a single habitation at the mission—excepting the church itself—which was not in ruins; and be it remembered, likewise, that

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the great numbers of Indians—the laborers on the mission in the old days, and which alone made it possible to erect such an imposing collection of buildings—are no more. There are a few Indians at the little town of San Luis Rey, but they are insignificant in numbers; and, in addition, it must not be forgotten that now all assistance from them has to be paid for in regular laborers' wages. The conditions are different, to-day, and the outlook must be enough to deter any but the most enthusiastic and zealous; for it is Father O'Keefe's intention to restore the ex-mission, so far as possible or advisable, to what it was in former days. By the greatest good fortune, the church (naturally the most important building) has resisted the onslaughts of time and vandalism to a far greater degree than has the rest; this will require practically little work to restore to a condition of permanent usefulness, and without loss of character of the original Moorish construction, which is a matter for congratulation to all interested in the architecture of the Spanish era of California's history.

Father O'Keefe is a worthy successor to Peyri. Known and loved by every one, Protestant and Catholic, in Santa Barbara, he unites the most amiable qualities of character with that enthusiasm and strength of purpose necessary to accomplish the work he has laid upon himself, which made his predecessor's task so completely successful.

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Father O'Keefe's course will be watched with interest, and his success awaited with the certainty of ultimate attainment.

But we are lingering here too long. Leaving San Luis Rey reluctantly, (and one is strongly tempted to forego altogether the remainder of the trip to Pala in order to have the entire day for this historic ruin) the road continues along the San Luis Rey River, which is in sight for almost the whole twenty miles, first on the left bank for nearly a mile beyond the mission, then crossing by means of a ford, when the rest of the way lies on the north side of the stream. In the summer and fall, the San Luis Rey is nothing but a stream, and a small one at that, winding its tiny, serpentine path among the stretches of sandy flats which, in winter and spring, are covered sometimes with a roaring torrent. The luxuriant line of wood-growth along the river-banks shows clearly the influence the river has, and, indirectly, the large amount of water carried to the ocean; as, indeed, the sandy flats tell the same story.

As we continue on our way up the river, which, in correct California style, but contrary to the generally preconceived notion of rivers, grows larger as we advance, the road offers a finer and grander view, almost at every step. And it is along this fifteen or twenty miles, especially the last ten, may be found some of the most lovely scenery of

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Southern California. As one advances, the country becomes more verdant: clumps and groves, and forests, almost, among the hills, increase, covering the ground which, until now, has been bare yellow and brown, the customary and characteristic color of this region for nearly two-thirds of the year. Those who feel the lack of trees and other verdure of Southern California may find here scenery which cannot fail to satisfy them in this respect: it is, in fact, much like the country among the White Mountains. The hills grow higher and closer together, until, finally, they seem to bar the way to any farther progress. Frequently, in early morning, as well as in periods of storm, these hills will be enveloped in clouds, hiding them entirely from sight, or covering their tops as with a cap, or banding them with long, waving streamers. This last arrangement lends an appearance of greater height to these hills—mountains, rather, for some of them have an altitude of many thousand feet.

Twenty miles is a long drive, but one does not tire of this trip on account of the great diversity and interest of the country traversed; yet it is not altogether with regret that we see Pala coming into view. The little settlement—only a house or two besides those forming the mission—appears in sight but a short time before reaching it; it is

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too completely surrounded by hills to be seen from afar in any direction.

It is a pity that Pala is so inaccessible: if it were otherwise the place would be swamped with tourists and visitors, for it is situated among some of the finest scenery to be found anywhere in Southern California. Yet the true lover of Pala cannot but be glad of this same inaccessibility; else it would, inevitably, lose its greatest charm—that of the untouched life of former days. Mountains are all about, on every side save toward the west, and the sea, twenty-four miles away; and even in that quarter they are but little lower and but little less crowded than on the rest of the horizon. The San Luis Rey, a short way south of the settlement, runs westerly through the valley, its course marked by a line of trees.

With the exception of the landscape and the remains of the mission, there is nothing here of interest, for Pala is a small Indian community, and is scattered thinly over the surrounding country, with no centre of population. Here at the mission, where are the postoffice and general merchandise store, both in one building opposite, there is more of a settlement than at any spot, until one goes farther up the river among the mountains, where, six miles beyond Pala, the Pauma Valley is reached, in which are a few Indian families living on their reservation.

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But the visitor will turn his attention at once to the ruined mission close at hand. It comprises a *campo santo* at one corner, in the midst of which rises the bell tower, an unique feature in the country; for among all the missions there is not another like it. It is built of stone and cement, overlaid with white plaster which gleams in the bright sunlight. There are two openings, one above the other, each containing a bell which has become toned by the weather to a golden green color—harmonising as well as contrasting most beautifully with the pure white of the walls. The tower is not square, but like a thick, flat wall, in which are the openings, ending by a series of curves in a pointed arch; on one side is a flight of steep steps leading up to the bells. The cemetery, in which stands the tower, is almost as interesting. It is a small enclosure, with bare ground everywhere, and only a few bushes growing in it. The graves are raised slightly above the rest of the soil; some of them decorated with shells around their borders, and a few enclosed in black or white fences. These latter appear to be family plots, for each fence surrounds a few graves, big and little, as if of one family. Few of the graves have dates or inscription, and these are the more recent ones; the older graves, for the greater part, bare of everything, and distinguisha-

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ble from the ground only by the slight, sometimes almost imperceptible, mound.

About thirty feet from the tower is the beginning of the mission buildings; a long, low line of *adobe*, tiled roofed structure. Originally the buildings formed a square, about one hundred and fifty feet on a side, enclosing the usual *patio*; but all, excepting part of the front, is completely in ruins, some of it entirely obliterated. In the still habitable and occupied part is the church, whither the Indians flock for mass. The parish is under the present charge of the fathers at San Luis Rey, one of whom comes here every alternate Sunday for services. Here we see farther evidences of the usefulness of Mission San Luis Rey—Pala is again under their charge, as it was in days gone by; and not Pala alone, but San Juan Capistrano also. The Sundays Pala is not visited by the father are given to the other mission.

Pala was founded in 1816 by the fathers at Mission San Luis Rey, under the name of San Antonio. We have spoken of it above as a mission, but this is not strictly accurate. It was really founded as an *asistencia*, or branch, of San Luis Rey, and was never under a separate government, although it grew, within two years, to be larger than several of the regular missions. There were a number of *rancherías*, or Indian settlements, within a radius of a day's journey from San

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Luis Rey, at which the padres used to hold services at intervals; but Pala was the only one to be raised to the dignity of an *asistencia*, and to enjoy the residence of a priest. This region of Nueva California supported a large number of natives, and as they were milder and more easily and quickly subdued and civilised than those in many parts farther north, both Mission San Luis Rey, as we have seen, and her daughter, San Antonio, profited by it. It must be remembered, of course, that the Indians here, as was the case with the parent mission at its inception, had already felt, in a great measure, the foreign influence of the adjacent mission; and they formed, practically, an *asistencia* before Pala was duly made into one. But to visit San Luis Rey for religious, as well as general, instruction, was impracticable for so great a number; besides, most probably, crowding uncomfortably the mission church, large though it was. But the fact that San Antonio itself grew to be larger than Santa Inés, San Luis Obispo, and nearly twice as large as Santa Cruz, shows, almost as clearly as the phenomenal rise and growth of San Luis Rey, the enthusiasm and devotion of the presiding genius of both establishments—Padre Peyri.

San Antonio led a quiet life. More than a score of miles from the coast, the usual ground for political and ecclesiastical action, it was too isolated

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to have a part in, or to be witness to, the few stirring events that occurred in the province from time to time, which go to make up general history. Referring to Bancroft's history of the state—the most voluminous source for information of the ancient mission history—we find Pala mentioned barely a half dozen times, and then to note only the most meagre facts, which have been incorporated above..

Paraphrasing Carlyle, it can be said of San Antonio, happy is the mission whose annals are blank in history-books. The *asistencia* passed a happy, uneventful life, fostered and directed by the parent mission; it survived, too, in some measure, the fatal period of secularisation, and has remained until now, a simple, quiet Indian village, passing its days far from the busy turmoil of modern life, alone and almost forgotten.

When Mrs. Jackson ("H. H.") was in California, she visited Pala for the purpose of learning more of the status of the Indians in regard to the seizure of their lands; information which she utilised in her well-known endeavors to right, so far as in her lay, the wrong committed in the name of the government. The land question has been a burning one ever since California was ceded to the United States. That wrong has been done is pretty generally conceded; but many of the land titles under the Mexican law were so vague and

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loose, it was inevitable that some injury, fancied if not real, would be inflicted; and, as is the usual result, the Indians suffered the most severely. Pala had some experience with this trouble, although finally made into a reservation; but far greater sufferers were the Indians settled at Temecula and in the neighboring country, Indians who had been under the ministrations of San Luis Rey. These were practically ousted bodily from their lands and forced to leave their old homes.

It is hard to tear oneself from Pala: this peaceful valley surrounded by towering mountains and hills; the ruined mission with its quaint *campanario*, and two or three houses nearby, making up the little hamlet; the tree-fringed banks of the river cutting straight across the valley toward the western horizon; and over and above all, bathing and transforming every object in the landscape with its radiance, the sunshine, a most potent factor everywhere in Southern California. Here San Antonio rests, dreaming of the "far off things" of days long gone by. Here may she pass still many years of peace, a silent witness to the simple life of the Indians; and to them may this valley always be a home, un vexed by the rush and hurry of the outside world!

November, 1899.

## The Mojave Desert

IT IS a far cry from New York City to the Mojave Desert. There, one is in the heart of the most intense, high-strung life in every phase—commercial, intellectual, æsthetic, social—with all its attendant changes, sudden and frequent, going to make up the modern city life; here, where I am at this moment, it is as though one were in another world altogether, on another planet, the Moon, for instance, that sphere which shows what our planet will be in future æons. The deserts of the world may well be likened to the decayed spots on the surface of an apple: they are the beginnings of what will eventually be the condition of the entire world, when all water shall have been dissipated into space, or absorbed into the interior of the globe.

Probably the most striking characteristic of the desert, and the one which the new-comer will notice first, is that of its silence and solitude. Often have I waked at night and been impressed with the intense stillness of all around. At such a time one almost believes he can hear the “music of the spheres,” as he gazes at the stars, shining so

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softly and steadily from out the deep, purple blue of the heavens. The stars, in Southern California generally, seem nearer the earth, have a warmer glow, and lose nearly all of the glitter of the eastern night sky. Here the stars seldom "twinkle." And the moon, in a more pronounced degree, possesses a warm, almost ruddy quality of light very rarely seen in the east; and the amount of light she sheds appears much greater than that to which we of the eastern coast are accustomed. Is it to the clear, thin, or dry quality of air this is due? Is it to one or all? But night is not the only time when this stillness may be almost felt: it occurs once in a while during the day when the air is motionless; but it is rare, for a fly or some other winged insect is usually to be heard during the warm, sunny hours of the day.

Barring the wind—and the wind is an almost ever present quantity on the Mojave Desert—the sounds that may be audible from time to time are very few and well defined. The wind is, *par excellence*, the first and most prominent. It would be difficult to find a windier place—taking the year through—than this. No season escapes, summer and winter, spring and fall, all are alike in this one thing, that just about so often—once in three or four days—the wind will blow for twenty-four to thirty-six hours in a steady, hard gale. Sometimes there will be an extra day of calm before the

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next blow sets in, or the wind may be less heavy than ordinarily; again, on the other hand, the still days may be wholly wanting for a week or more, or the wind may be extraordinarily fierce and powerful, before which the tent or light frame cabin of the desert dweller will be annihilated. The heaviest winds occur usually in March, but no month is exempt.

The wind is so supremely obstreperous that after mentioning it, it is, by no means, easy to decide upon what comes next in the list of desert sounds. Man is such a rare and insignificant object here, that he, with his accompanying horse or burro, and dog, and an occasional gun-shot, hardly counts as an item in this category. So, leaving out man as too trivial to be of use in this connection, probably the next thing to make an impression, but at night only, are the coyotes. Take two or three coyotes, and the resultant noise and discord is not to be sneered at. They are harmless, inoffensive animals, about as large as a medium-sized dog, and looking, at a little distance, much like one; indeed, they resemble the dog family in many respects, and are, I believe, a species of wolf or fox. They are seldom seen or heard during the day, but at night, from early evening till near daybreak, they may be heard at any time. Not that they are to be heard at any moment of the night, or even heard every night, for they are not so com-

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mon as that; but should they happen to be in your neighborhood, prowling in search of food, you can hardly fail to hear their discordant cry—partly howl, partly bark, partly *laugh* almost; it is impossible to describe it perfectly.

More agreeable sounds are those denoting the bird-life of the desert. Birds are none too common here, but there are always some in most parts of the desert, and in winter and early spring they are fairly numerous individually and by genera. The birds give more life to the desert than any other one thing: to see and hear them as they flit from bush to bush, or skim through the air chattering as they fly, or, in the early morning, to listen to their song, which they warble here just the same as in less lonely places in the state—all this imparts to the desert the greatest portion of its small amount of brightness, and redeems it of much of its forbidding aspect. No place can be utterly desolate where any birds are found. The meadow, or, more strictly speaking, western, lark is the most interesting, as well as companionable bird I have seen on the desert. It is the representative species of lark of the western coast, and in more favored localities is one of the prominent birds of the state. Here, of course, it is not common, yet by no means rare, and its song, always beautiful, is in this particular section of the country, doubly so. Besides the lark there are sparrows,

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hawks, buzzards, quail and others. I have never seen a mockingbird out here, and hardly believe it ever comes so far from civilisation—it is a bird that needs the near presence of trees and flowers to be at home.

An unpleasant sound, which sends a thrill through the most hardy, is the peculiar whirring made by the rattlesnake when alarmed and on the defensive. Once heard, it is never forgotten, and is a warning always heeded by the intruder. The rattlesnake is very common in some parts of the desert, and may be nearly always found wherever there are large rocks and boulders. A peculiar plant, growing hereabouts, is called snakeweed or rattlesnakeweed. It has a large seed-pod, and, in the summer and fall, after its period of growth is past, the seeds rattle in the dry pod with every breath of wind, producing a sound not unlike that of the rattlesnake when aroused. Even experienced persons are sometimes deceived by this weed; but rattlesnakes are not usually found where this plant grows, which is in places free from rocks. Tarantulas, centipedes and scorpions make no sound as they travel over the ground, but they should not be left out in any enumeration of the life of the desert. They are not very common (the tarantula is the most so of the three), but enough to make everyone exercise caution in going about in warm weather. Their bite is not

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fatal, but very painful; and no one ever travels on the desert without a generous supply of whiskey as an antidote to a bite from any of these venomous insects as well as from the rattlesnake. The horned toad, or, more properly speaking, horned lizard, is found here occasionally. It is not a pretty animal, but an interesting one, and perfectly harmless, and is frequently tamed as a pet. A singular means of defence has this creature: when angry it ejects two or three drops of blood from its eye—or more properly from the orbit—to a distance of several inches—a startling thing when witnessed for the first time. I believe this blood is considered to be acrid and more or less poisonous if it come in contact with a sore or abrasion on the skin.

What is the general idea of the desert? Before I had been across the continent, traveling over the "Great American Desert" and visiting the Mojave Desert, I used to imagine it as an immense, sandy waste, level and even, stretching as far as the eye could reach, perhaps with a low rise of ground here and there, yet hardly enough to be called a hill, and without the slightest vestige of vegetation. That was my idea of the desert, gathered for the most part from my school days when studying about the Desert of Sahara, and, I fancy, it is what arises in most people's minds when they speak of a desert. I have not seen the Saharan Desert,

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but the Mojave is very different from the idea expressed above. In the first place, much of it is mountainous or hilly, and I do not think there is any spot in the whole desert from which mountains, and good lofty ones too, cannot be seen. I have spent the last four months on the desert at an elevation of over four thousand feet above the sea—no mean height for effects of temperature—and from the windows of our cabin I can see mountains over twelve thousand feet high, some of them distant nearly one hundred miles. Of course, there are many spots—of great extent too—which are level as a floor, but the mountains are always on the horizon. Death Valley, the entrance to which is about fifty miles from my present headquarters, is an unknown region to me, but in that dread spot the mountains are ever present to sight, and I fancy that the general aspect of the landscape there is quite similar to this part of the desert; somewhat less vegetation—in places, I suppose, none at all, for I have heard that the humidity in some parts, at times, is not over two or three per cent.

The extreme scantiness of vegetation, is, of course, the greatest characteristic of the desert landscape. With the exception of the yucca, no tree grows here, and in certain sections—this particular spot where I am at present, for instance—even the yucca is absent. This tree seems to have

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favorite belts, where it flourishes, in some places growing so thickly as to form a real forest. It is most appropriate to the desert, sending up a bare, rough trunk, and branching toward the top into limbs covered closely with long, linear leaves of a dark, glossy green, looking, in all but color, like gigantic test-tube cleaners. One is reminded of Doré and his weird drawings of trees at the sight of these yuccas. In some parts of the mountains, and at high altitudes, forests of pine may be found, but they are not general. These trees are the only prominent vegetable object in the view anywhere, and we must descend from them to the humble plants of the ground for the next most important influence on the landscape. These are the low bushes covering the earth nearly everywhere and growing so closely that they affect the color to a marked degree. They are of two varieties, what are called, in common parlance, greasewood (*Sarcobatus*) and *chamiza* (*Adenostoma*). There are, also, two or three species of the well-known mesquite to be found here, but this genus is represented by very humble specimens in this part of the desert. These plants grow from two to ten feet high, the greasewood dark green with black stems; the other brighter and more delicate, as well as smaller. Yet these plants are not so green as to give a general hue of green to the landscape. That cheerful color has no place here,

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excepting only where the yuccas grow in such abundance as to present a solid effect of color, and, also, a short time after the rainy season. These plants, with the yuccas, are the prevailing varieties of vegetation. There are others—such as the two species of *Opuntia*, the *cholla* and prickly-pear cacti, several small plants, almost like moss, growing close to the ground, and some others, here and there—but they are few in number, as well as variety, and have no especial influence on the general effect.

Water is, of course, never present in the general view, for that is almost a minus quantity; the only water, in far the larger part of the desert, being tiny springs, which, usually, have to be developed to afford enough water to be of use to man.

Color is one of the most surprising things connected with the desert. Instead of the notion of our school-days, that the desert is one blinding glare of sand, with a grey sky overhead, we have, on the Mojave Desert, at least, a wealth of color hardly surpassed by any landscape in California, and nowhere in the world can richer, more vivid and glowing color be found than in California. On the desert, color, except at sunrise and sunset, is not so intense, locally and in opposition; it is more quiet and subdued, running from the yellow and brown of the foreground, through warm greys and purples to the distant blues of the hills on the horizon.

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zon. But on the horizon, and at the close of the day, nature spreads out her most gorgeous color; the sunsets, particularly, are extraordinary in this respect, and absolutely unpaintable. Sometimes there is the most marvelous coloring everywhere on the horizon, the eastern hills glowing a pearly tint in the rays of the setting sun, while the western sky will be a mass of molten yellow and red, almost painful to the eyes. Sunsets are unusually short-lived here, darkness coming on with almost startling rapidity.

One such I saw here was exceptional even in this land of wonderful sunsets. Four of us, the two Messrs. C—, my brother, F— and myself, were driving from our cabin to Barstow, a distance of forty miles. We started at nine in the morning, later than we had intended, but somehow no one ever gets away from the camp, when starting for town or on any trip, at the time set beforehand; and on this particular occasion, the roads being very dry and the sand deep and heavy, we were a good twelve hours on the way. But the day was a beautiful one, the air still and warm, there being just enough cloudy haziness in the sky to temper the heat of the sun during the midday hours. At sunset, these clouds collected together in long, regular bars across the western sky; and, as the sun went down, they gathered up and absorbed his own fiery radiance—intense, gleaming

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yellow, shading off into warm madder brown, while the upper rows of clouds faded into a pink that was hardly distinguishable from the vaulting blue of the sky. We were out on a large level stretch at the time, and had an unimpeded view clear around the horizon; and while the western sky was glowing with this wonderful wealth of color, in the east there was no less color beauty, although not so vivid. The mountains on the horizon were warm red and purple, the sky above shimmering grey and pink, with the blue shades of night creeping up over the tops of the mountains. In the west, a little above the horizon, toward which it was hurrying to drop behind the hills, was the new moon,

"No bigger than an unobserved star,  
Or tiny point of fairy cimeta."

It was one of those rare evenings in this part of the world, when the sunset colors faded less quickly, and we four gazed at it until night was full upon us, letting the horses, unheeded, plod along at their own gait. To my mind arose the beautiful lines of Wordsworth's "Ninth Evening Voluntary."

The clouds, as in every landscape, play an important rôle. During the rainy season, which is the winter here, they present an almost daily varying view. Now, the sky will be spotted here and

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there with fleecy cirrus clouds, so high as to seem of the ether in which they float; again, vast level stretches of clouds, dark grey and wintry looking, will appear covering the distant mountains, turning eventually into rain or snow storms; at another time, a thick, ominous-looking cumulus cloud will roll up from the hills, and rush along the ground, black and forbidding, driven furiously by the wind. Our altitude is such that a cloud like this appears actually to touch the ground as it passes over the lower level beneath us. After a rain, I have seen the low-lying clouds pass away from the sides of the hills, like a great sheet of cotton rolling up into a high mound, leaving the ground dark and glistening with the rain-drops. Being so high, we are not infrequently enveloped in the clouds during a storm, when everything will be obliterated as in the densest fog.

One or two snow-storms are expected every winter. We had one in January, which was a genuine storm of squalls, such as occur in New England. Four great rushing snow squalls had we during the day, and at night-fall the ground was white with the fast-falling flakes. It was hard to believe, then, that we were in Southern California, on the desert, though it might be. But these are rare, most of the precipitation being rain; many times raining here when higher up in the mountains it will snow. In the summer there is no rain, ex-

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cept, very rarely, a thunder-shower. These are sometimes severe, a cloud-burst occurring last summer, which tore down the side of a hill not far from here, leaving great furrows to mark its violence.

After the rainy season, in the late spring, the desert literally blossoms as the rose. Wild flowers in countless numbers cover the ground and hillsides as with a carpet. The color then is gorgeous in the extreme. I have not seen it, and shall not be here when it comes this spring, but I am told it is similar to what is found in the fertile lands near the coast, only later in the season as the altitude is so much greater. If so, I know what it is like, for I have seen the coast lands in the bloom of spring, when color riots in glorious tints. I remember one spring, four years ago, when I was driving through the country near San Diego. The ground was undulating with low, rounded hills, covered with bloom of the most vivid color: here a patch, acres in extent, of the tenderest yellow-green; beyond, another spot, perhaps a mile or two in length and as many wide, of the brightest lemon yellow; and each and all spangled at intervals with blotches of scarlet, red and blue. Nothing but the color of sunset can surpass such hues. Yet I fancy the desert does not present quite such a mass and color as this: the altitude militates against it, as well as the smaller rain-

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fall, and the ground, as I have seen it in the autumn and winter, does not appear to be thickly enough sown to produce the result seen on the coast land.

I have not yet mentioned the dry lakes found on the desert. They are singular objects, and are very numerous in this section of the country. At a distance, and in certain lights—notably early morning and before sunset—they have all the appearance of ordinary bodies of water, lying there shining placidly in the sun's rays; but a nearer approach shows them for what they are—the beds of former lakes, baked hard and dry under the blazing sun. They are smooth as a board, but not all of the same firmness. These lakes are gradually growing smaller, as each year the surrounding vegetation encroaches more and more, spreading over the boundary; until finally, at some future time, they will disappear altogether. These lakes are the remains of former lakes, or, perhaps, of one large lake or inland sea; for all this region, with the exception, perhaps, of the tallest mountains, was once under water, the geology of the country showing sedimentary deposits nearly everywhere. It is, I believe, considered generally to belong to the Quaternary lake deposits, much of the ground being made up of slate of the Jurassic period, sandstones, rhyolite and tufaceous rocks. It is a most interesting region in which to study

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geology, the nakedness of the hills showing alluvial strata in the plainest manner. At the same time rocks of igneous origin may be found frequently.

One of the most singular views to be seen in this region is the Calico Hills, a range of mountains on the western border of the desert. They get their name on account of their color, which resembles more a piece of calico than anything else. From a distance they are not very different from other hills, as their brilliant colors are toned by the aerial perspective; but as one nears them, they spread out on the right hand and on the left, displaying their colors in well defined patches—red, yellow, violet, bright green, pink, with here and there streaks of crimson and brown—all sharply outlined one from another, like a piece of gaudy calico. Gaudy is, indeed, the word which most accurately describes these fantastic hills. On a closer investigation, they are seen to have a core of rhyolite which, in the particular spot where I crossed the hills, was red in color; overlying this, were the rocks of the various colors, violet, green, etc. These latter occur as a covering to the underlying rhyolite, forming, at the top of each hill, a thick coating of small broken rock which, as it reaches the lower level, thins out until the red substratum is seen, bare of covering. Each hill has its own particular color, no hill, so far as I could see, having more than one color of rock covering

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the rhyolite. The top layer of rock is mostly tufa, but partaking of the character of the underlying rhyolite.

The Mojave Desert is a valuable mining region, although still in its infancy as a mineral producer. There are mines of gold, silver, copper, turquoise, marble, borax, and so on. At Randsburg, several gold mines have turned out very successful; near Dagget are some silver and borax mines, the former, however, from the recent low price of silver, having shut down for a time. There is a turquoise mine, the Danby, that has turned out some fine specimens of that stone, much of which is shipped to Tiffany's. Copper, as yet, has attracted little attention, most prospectors hunting for gold; but where I have been for the last four months, there are large deposits of copper, so all surface indications show, and the district, very soon, is to be in active operation. If indications fail not, this, eventually, will be one of the richest mining districts in the world, not surpassed by the famous Lake Superior copper deposits. Ten years, perhaps much less, will see a vast difference in this part of the desert.

This is the present aspect of the desert. Of what it was one, two, or three centuries ago, we can only conjecture. That the physical characteristics were different is improbable, in so geologically short a time; possibly there was greater

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abundance of water, perhaps the dry lakes, then, holding bodies of water; if so, probably, vegetation was both more luxuriant and wide-spread. But in those days there were some inhabitants of these waste lands. The Indians, mostly of the Piute tribe, were here, and have left their trace in many parts. Here and there, rocks have been cut with their hieroglyphics and pictographs, markings still plain and clear, which should be preserved by means of photographs, if they have any historical or legendary value. Of this, I cannot say, for I have never heard of any examination made of them by an ethnologist. Occasionally arrow- and spear-heads are found, and once in a while one runs across a grave on a hillside, showing that the Indians, however few in numbers they may have been, were a permanent feature of the desert. They are gone now—I have not seen or heard of an Indian in my four months' sojourn. Yet there are still a few to be found toward the north, roaming the desert as of old; but they seem not to come so far south as this. Perhaps it is too near civilisation to suit them.

January, 1899.

## Leaves from an Artist's Diary

**M**ISSION SAN FERNANDO, California, Friday evening, June —, 1895.—Well! Here we are at last, after being nearly two days on the road from Capistrano, reaching the mission early this morning. Started at sunrise, yesterday, from our night camp just below Santa Ana, and traveled all day, till nightfall, when we were still far from San Fernando. That may seem a long time to take for a jaunt of little more than fifty miles, but marketing in Orange, and doing several necessary errands in Los Angeles, as well as taking nearly two hours to drive through the city, used up a good part of the day; and sundown overtook us in the middle of an immense field of wheat, ready and waiting to be cut, through which the road passed. Coming at last to a group of buildings, which turned out to be the headquarters of the men who were harvesting the grain, we stopped to enquire our way to San Fernando. The man we asked, evidently an overseer, was a surly fellow, and replied shortly, to our dismay, that we were five miles from the town. After a moment, we asked if he would permit us to

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water our horses at the trough inside the fence. The man's only answer was to turn on his heel and walk off to the house near-by. He must have taken us for tramps—we looked like them, I suppose, but tramps usually do not travel with a two-horse team. Rebuffed and provoked at the proceedings, we drove away and, as soon as we were out of sight of the settlement, turned off the road and drove into the wheat field on our right, and made our camp for the night there, hidden among the tall stalks of the grain. Fearing to be caught in our trespassing, we made a small fire which we kept going just long enough to fry some eggs and make coffee. José was more afraid than I, and strongly objected to my lighting the lantern, but I told him I was going to see what I was about while washing the dishes; so I proceeded to light up, but, I will confess it here, raised the wick barely enough to make out dimly what I was doing. Fortunately, the moon was nearly full, and had just risen, so we had sufficient light to go to bed by without any artificial aid. "Early to bed and early to rise" is the rule in camping, and this time we outdid ourselves; for the first faint trace of dawn had hardly appeared in the sky before we were awake and stirring. Preparing and eating breakfast as hastily as we had supper the night before, we loaded up the wagon, harnessed the horses, which had feasted royally on their stolen

## Leaves from an Artist's Diary

foraging the whole night long, and drove off quietly toward San Fernando. Thus we had our revenge of the man who would not be obliging to us.

This morning was cold and foggy, at times approaching rain. We drove on, and, at last, came to the end of the seemingly endless fields of wheat, which appeared to cover the whole extent of the valley, and had, for a change, eucalyptus trees and vegetable gardens, and an occasional house, here and there. At last, about nine o'clock, we came into sight of the mission, away off in the distance, which we recognised at once from the familiar long row of arches, extending the whole length of the building. José, as usual, was the first to discover the mission—he was looking out for it, while I was too much occupied in noting the grey colors of the foggy landscape to give much attention to the discovering of our destination, knowing well my companion would not miss seeing it anyway. As soon as we arrived at the mission, we reconnoitred it on all sides, and selecting a good place for camping, we asked permission of the foreman to stay there for a few days. Permission was readily granted, on condition we did nothing but sketch and examine the ruins.

We spent the rest of the morning unloading our wagon, laying in a supply of hay for the horses, and getting settled generally. About ten o'clock the fog lifted and the sun came out bright and

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warm, pleasing us greatly. After dinner, which we made quite elaborate and ate with deliberation, in recompense for our two meagre and hurried meals, I selected a subject for sketching and set to work, at which I remained until late. Perched on the wagon, from which José had taken away the horses after driving me to the spot, I was the object of interest to all the laborers on the place, as they passed and repassed to and from their work; but they were very polite, and annoyed me far less than many so-called educated people, who are supposed to have better manners. Work ended for the day, we had supper, and, as is my custom, before retiring for the night, I have made these few entries in my diary.

Saturday, June—. Had a beautiful sight, last night, just before going to sleep. The moon was hardly above the tops of the hills, on which it shed its mellow light, making a most lovely scene; while in the west the last gleams of the rosy, summer sunset were fading rapidly away. The combination of the two in one single whole was enchanting.

Worked all day with paints and brushes, and finished the day's work with a pencil sketch of one end of the group of buildings, which was particularly interesting from its picturesque ruinous conditions. I am working furiously fast, for me, a slow worker, for my time is limited, and there is so much I long to copy that the half or quarter can-

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not be done. The day was fair and warm, and there was no fog, this morning, to delay me in getting to work. The afternoon wind here is very strong, and though rather annoying on account of drying my paper so rapidly, tempers the heat of the sun which, without it, would be uncomfortably hot.

I have been racking my brains for days trying to think of something for José to do. My companion has simply to take care of the horses, cook, and in such various ways to help me; he has, beyond these, nothing to do, and finds time hang heavy on his hands. Not being able to read (I have been giving him lessons for some time now, in return, on his part, for lessons in Spanish), he has not that refuge, although he spends a part of each day in studying in a First Reader. That, walking about the country and sleeping, make up his list of occupations while I am working; and even these cannot be pursued all day long. He is as good and patient as can be, but I know all the time he longs to be back home and at his usual work, from which I took him to come with me. This afternoon, while he was talking with me in the midst of my work, I had a sudden inspiration, and told him I was going to show him how to use my camera, which I have hardly touched since starting, and to have him take pictures for me. At first he demurred, saying he could not learn

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how to do it, would injure the camera, and so on; but, after my showing him how easy it was, I told him of two or three places I wanted photographed, and sent him off. The thing worked like a charm. He started away, and it was more than an hour before I saw him again. On his return, I asked him what success. He said he had taken two pictures, one of the ancient date palms and one of the church entrance. The interior of the church, he said, was not lighted well at that time of day for a photograph. He is going to try it, to-morrow morning. I am interested to see with what quickness he has learned to know the proper light effects and when a picture will be good or not. But to think of his making only two exposures! Did anyone ever hear of that before on first trial of a camera? Of course, it being my camera had something to do with it, yet I fully expected him to expose at least ten or a dozen times. But I am delighted to have found something for him to do to help while away the hours, and am only sorry I did not think of it long before.

It was pleasant to get back to camp, to-night, and have supper hot from the fire; for since I started out on my trip, I have been hungry for every meal, and often long before meal time. This life in the open air, close to Nature, is a tonic which beats any medicine out of sight.

Sunday evening, June —. Have had a varied

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day, and a very lively one, this afternoon, for such a, usually, quiet, lonely place. As it was Sunday, I thought it best to get as much out of sight from the mission as possible, while at work. Whether campers, as a rule, keep the Sabbath, I know not; but with me, Sunday, I am sorry to say, has been as much a workday as any other. So, immediately after breakfast, I drove through the field in front of the mission, about a quarter mile and, after selecting my vantage ground, set to work. It was a damp, chilly morning; the fog was low on the hills and, at times, so heavy that it fell like fine rain, and I had to protect my paper with an umbrella, while working. When ready to color, I stopped to deliberate. To paint or not to paint? Shall I paint it with cloudy sky, or wait for the sun to come out? The fog may lift and clear inside of a half-hour; and, again, it may remain this way till noon. What to do? I waited a half hour —no change. Well! I cannot sit here all the morning and do nothing: I am going to set to work anyway and risk it. So I began, and, the circumstances acting as a spur, painted, as I seldom paint, for three hours, and then stopped for the morning. Fortunately, the fog did not lift until a short time before I left off work, and I had a morning of such color—grey and sombre—as I like best.

This afternoon, I took the cemetery adjoining

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the church for my seat of operations, to make a slight sketch of the side door of the building, including a grave close by; while José drove away to the town, a mile distant, to buy some bread if he should find the store open. After a time, I grew so hot there, sitting in the sun, with not a breath of air stirring—the high wall of the church shutting off every particle of breeze—that I could not endure it; so I left my work and wandered off into the cool interior of the church, where I passed nearly an hour in idle reverie. Recollecting, at last, I was wasting too much time, I took up my post once more, and worked, regardless of the heat which had then become less unbearable. After a while I heard voices, and presently two old women and three children came into sight over the brow of the hill, at the end of the burial ground, chattering and laughing. I soon saw they were Mexicans, bent on a Sunday visit to the cemetery. As soon as they spied me, they came to see what I was doing, and various exclamations about "*la puerta*" and "*el campo santo*" were uttered—but more than that I could not gather. Presently, appeared an aged Mexican woman, with grey hair, and wearing spectacles, which lent to her round face a very droll expression. Of course, she was acquainted with the others, and all set up a chattering, like so many magpies. It was only now and then I could gather a word, and not enough to

## Leaves from an Artist's Diary

understand what was said; but I knew I and my work were the subject of conversation, especially with the old woman in spectacles. Why, was explained later; for after a time, she walked over to the fenced-in grave I had been sketching, on which was set up a wooden cross, painted black and ornamented with lace, and with a look of pride, said to me, "*Este es el mio.*" I wanted to ask the name of the old *señora*, to write on my sketch; but was not sure it would be considered polite, so refrained. Presently drove up a carriage filled with more Mexicans, and then the hubbub that followed was distracting. The last comers were young fellows with their best girls, I could see at a glance; very good-looking people, all of them, and the girls well dressed. One of the young ladies soon monopolised the attention of all by relating a tale which must have been extremely amusing, judging from the shouts of laughter with which it was received. Being told in Spanish, and with the utmost speed, I gathered only one word of any import of the whole—" *pelando*." What does *pelando* mean? My limited supply of Spanish did not include this word, and I had no one to ask in my ignorance.

Soon after the conclusion of this highly entertaining story, the whole party prepared for departure, sauntering slowly from the cemetery. One young *señorita*, at the last moment, turned back

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and walked up to a grave, enclosed within a fence, as is the custom, and, leaning over, plucked a large pink rose growing at the top of a tall bush decorating the grave. Just at that instant, the Chinese cook, working at the mission, ambled into view through the church doorway. Catching sight of this act of desecration, he called out to the girl, speaking in the peculiarly drawling tones of most Chinamen when talking English, and with, apparently, great earnestness, as he prolonged the sound of the first two words:

“Oh, *muchacha*! [girl] you catchum flower; devil catchum you!”

But the *muchacha*, it appeared, was willing to take the consequences; for, with a merry laugh, she hurried off to her companions, waving the rose in triumph. It was comically funny.

On their disappearance, I was left, once more, to the company of the doves and swallows flying constantly in and out of the church ruin.

After a time, José returned, with some bread, and a pie, as a luxury for our table. He had passed a pleasant afternoon watching some horse-racing in the town, and was in good spirits the rest of the day and evening. While we were eating our supper, I thought, suddenly, of the word which had perplexed me so much.

“José, what does *pelando* mean?”

“Skinning,” was the laconic reply.

## Leaves from an Artist's Diary

Skinning! Now what do you suppose that story was all about, with *pelando* occurring more than once? I related to José the episode, and we speculated for some time on what the tale could have been.

Monday, June—. This morning, I ended my sketch begun yesterday. The usual morning fog cleared at an early hour, but, luckily, I had brought my work so nearly to completion, yesterday, that I had not much trouble in putting in the remaining details, even with the sun shining brightly on the landscape. About ten, I finished my painting, and spent the rest of the morning in idleness, watching the changes of light and shade in the scene before me, and listening to the meadow larks, singing everywhere in the fields.

This afternoon, I sketched the ancient palms towering above the olive trees in the orchard the other side of the stream. These olive trees are very old, but lack, by many years, the age of those at Mission San Diego, which are among the oldest, if not quite the oldest, in the state. As the sun went down behind them, the effect of the dazzling golden yellow of the sky, contrasted with the almost purple black of the trees, was extremely fine. But such vivid color cannot be rendered with paints and brushes, with any near approach to truth. A suggestion of the reality is all that can be given, and I have carefully avoided such subjects and

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impressionistic effects during my whole trip. My object has been more topographic—photographic, I might almost say—than impressionistic. Truth I have kept ever in mind, as of the first importance in these sketches, which I intend for a particular purpose,\* but after truth—cold, sober truth—I give myself up to color under all conditions which will not obliterate too much architectural detail of these missions, as well as the topographic truths of their surroundings.

A short time ago José went down to the stream nearby to shoot a cotton-tail which, he said, he had seen there, this afternoon, while watering the horses. He had not been gone more than fifteen minutes, when I heard the report of his gun, and saw him pick up his prey. He is now engaged in preparing it for breakfast. We have found game very scarce everywhere: all we have had are one quail and two rabbits, to-night's rabbit being the third.

Tuesday evening, June—. My last evening at San Fernando, as to-morrow we start for San Gabriel; and I shall leave this place with much more regret than I thought possible when I came, even exceeding what I felt on leaving Capistrano. I spent this morning in sketching one of the old grated windows and the door in the front build-

\*The sketches made by the writer on this trip were used in illustrating his book, *The Missions of Nueva California*.

## Leaves from an Artist's Diary

ing, after which I explored, so far as I was permitted, the different deserted rooms.

Although I had, before coming here, but a hazy idea of the mission, yet I had always thought of it as the remains of a once small and unimportant establishment. When, therefore, I saw, for the first time, two large, imposing buildings, standing among a mass of ruined houses and walls, which covered some eight or ten acres, I was astonished that I could have had such a mistaken conception of it.

The two main buildings, the monastery and the church, are in fair preservation; the former quite intact, affording a comfortable dwelling for the farm laborers staying there. It is a long, imposing, rectangular, one-storied building, with the round-arched cloister, common to many of the missions; the rooms are large, but quite dark, on account of the few windows, heavily barred with iron grating. It is a satisfaction to see the old tiled roof still remaining; although, in several places, it is broken in, making large holes which should be repaired to preserve the building.\* But its broken condition is, to a lover of the picturesque, far preferable to a new, firm roof, particularly if built of ugly grey shingles, with which so many of the Missions are repaired.

\*This has since been done by the Landmarks Club of Los Angeles.

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A shingled roof on one of these old Spanish cloisters and *adobe* buildings is an incongruity which makes one shudder.

Back of the monastery, distant about one hundred yards, is the church, a large, tall building of *adobe*; the four walls are practically whole, but the roof is nearly gone—only the beams and a few tiles still clinging to them, at one end, remaining.\* All detailed ornamentation—never much, at the best, in these missions; as, indeed, they are finer and more impressive without it—has perished; but, barring the roof, the general view of the church from a little distance is only slightly marred by its ruined condition.

A line of smaller ruined houses connect these two principal buildings, the three forming parts of three sides of a square, which was completed on the fourth side by a similar row of buildings now in ruins. The whole formed the *patio*, or open court, the arrangement in building carried out at nearly all of the missions in California.

How unerringly the old *padres* selected lovely sites for their missions! Their choice could not have been happier, in most instances, had they been artists or landscape gardeners, devoting all their days to the study of the beautiful and picturesque in Nature. This example of Mission San

\*Since re-roofed by the Landmarks Club.

## Leaves from an Artist's Diary

Fernando is one of the finest I have seen. San Fernando Valley is unusually full of topographic and color beauty; pictures of surpassing interest and artistic quality being had from every point of the compass. What finer view would one care to have than that to be seen from my camp behind, and close to, the old church ruin, looking off across the valley toward the San Fernando Mountains, on the northwestern horizon? At this time of the year, when the ground is yellowed by the dry stubble of the harvested grain, marked, here and there, by a dark green bush or tree, contrasting so perfectly with the deep, warm purple hills on the horizon, and, over all, the intense blue sky, cloudless but for a few light straw-colored streaks across its expanse—could an artist ask for a finer, more perfect subject for his brush? Why cannot I stay here a month instead of five days—yes, three months would be none too long, even when I have to consider the other places I must visit, and my limited time for all? However, I am very happy to have had these few short days here, tantalising as they have been, for the very reason that they were so few and so short.

While eating supper, José told me he saw another rabbit, to-day, near the spot where he shot the one we had for breakfast, this morning; and said he was going to get it for to-morrow's breakfast. I asked him if he expected to find it again

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in the same place. Of course, he answered, it would come for a drink. So off he went, and, sure enough, in a few minutes, he returned with the rabbit. Poor little thing! It had been eating its supper; for a bunch of tender, young grass was sticking out of its mouth. I wish I could restore it its life; but, to-morrow morning, I shall be glad to have it for breakfast, I fear, without one regretful thought.

Mission San Gabriel. Wednesday evening, June—. Left San Fernando, this morning. I would give much to have been able to stay longer, but it was out of the question, and I had to tear myself away. Whether I look at it from the camper's or the artist's point of view, my five days' stay there was an ideal one. A sportsman, or one fond of company, would find it, to the last degree, dull; for both game and company are scarce; but an artist or idler could not find a more perfect spot, and to one, like myself, combining something of the artist with more of the idler, a place like this remains forever affectionately in memory.

1895.

## The Home of Ramona.

PROBABLY no place of interest in Southern California, outside of the cities and larger towns, is better known by name to every traveler in the state than is Camulos; due entirely to Mrs. Jackson's making use of the *rancho* as the setting for her well-known story. The history of Ramona, as told by her creator, appeals to three classes of readers: to the general novel reader, who takes up every new story as it comes from the press; to the admirer of Mrs. Jackson, for her writings, and for the interest and sympathy she displayed for the Indian and his wrongs, and for her endeavors to do all in her power to ameliorate his condition; and to the traveler or dweller in the state, who has become fascinated by the early history of California, and the local atmosphere of those days which has fled from the land, leaving but a vestige, here and there, to show us what the early Spanish California life was like. These three classes of readers of *Ramona* make a large number who are familiar with the story and with the musical name of her childhood and girlhood home.

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Although Camulos is so well known by name, it is, rather singularly, visited by a relatively small number of tourists in the state. Singularly, because no place is more easily accessible, or visited with less trouble and fatigue. But Camulos, while on the railroad running from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara, and having a station close by the settlement, seems to be hardly enough of an attraction in itself, alone, to induce the average tourist to break his trip to Santa Barbara in order to visit an old Spanish *rancho*. A further reason may be due to the fact that, according to the present schedule, there is a long wait between the morning and afternoon trains passing through the place—an interval of six or seven hours, as one may be bound to Santa Barbara or to Los Angeles. As the *rancho* can be seen in every detail open to the public in an hour's time, few persons seem to care to use the better part of a day for a visit to it. Then, in addition, the traveler must take a luncheon with him, or go without a midday meal; for there are no accommodations for refreshments. The station is intended solely as a shipping point for the products of the *rancho*.

Perhaps the most satisfactory way to pay a visit to Camulos is to leave the train at Piru City, two miles to the west; a little place, city only in name, but possessing a good country hotel, where a fair dinner may be had. Afterward, a short

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drive of two miles, through the valley on land belonging to the Camulos estate, through which run both road and railroad, brings one to the *rancho*.

The Santa Clara is a fertile, well watered valley, reaching from the mountains, east of Camulos, westward to Ventura, and the ocean, over thirty miles away. Hills, in well-ordered ranks, border it on either side, breaking away gradually into smaller and lower masses as they range off into the west and approach the sea. These hills, in the neighborhood of Camulos and Piru, have little forest vegetation, and are rather desolate in the bright light of midday; but, later in the afternoon, when they are cast into shade by the declining sun, they become great masses of purple-grey, appearing twice as high as they in reality are. During these later hours of the day, and particularly at sunset, Nature here, as at every other spot in Southern California, displays her power in coloring the landscape with all the wonderful tints of her palette.

Through the middle of the valley extends a line of bright, vivid green, made up of the grain fields, and clumps and rows of trees, tall, straight, needle-like eucalypti, great, rounded black walnuts, and bright yellow-green cottonwoods—these mark the course of the Santa Clara River, a never failing source for the vegetation along its borders, even in the dryest years: it is the life of the *rancho*,

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which is laid out along its path. During the last few minutes of the drive, one has in view a cross, planted high on the top of a hill, and showing brightly white against the deep blue sky behind it. It is a plain wooden cross, one of a number which were put up years ago, as a sign to the weary wayfarer, when traveling was not what it is now, that he was on the right road; or, should he be so favored as to be permitted to enjoy the hospitality of the family at the *rancho*, (and every traveler in those early days was welcomed at mission, *rancho*, or any other settlement that night might find him near), that here were rest and refreshment until the morning. "There they stood, summer and winter, rain and shine, solemn, outstretched arms;" this one near the road being a landmark to all journeying through the valley either by the railroad or driving. Another cross may be seen high up on the other side of the river.

The graveyard of the Del Valle family lies a few rods beyond the little settlement, and, perched on the side of a gentle slope and with its square white vault in the centre of the enclosure, and the numerous little white fences surrounding the separate plots, it forms a prominent point in the view. This burial place is used by the Catholics in this part of the country, as there is none other near. In the mausoleum in the centre is the grave of Ignacio Del Valle, the son of Don Antonio. A large

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white cross is over his tomb, on which is the following inscription:

Ygnacio del Valle  
Murió el dia 30 Marzo  
1880  
á la  
EDAD  
71

And a little more, below, too small to read from outside the enclosure. Presumably the grave of Don Antonio, the first of the family to come to Camulos, is here also, but it is not distinguishable from outside the locked gate of the fence surrounding the graveyard.

Crossing the railroad track for the third time since leaving Piru, the little station is passed, affording the traveler a sight of one of the chief products of the *rancho* in a multitude of boxes of oranges piled upon the platform, awaiting shipment. Just beyond, a few rods, the barns and out-buildings are passed, and then the house itself, built forty-five years ago, the home of the Del Valle family, is close at hand.

To one unacquainted with the Spanish-Moorish style of architecture of Mexico and California, the first sight of the Camulos building is disappointing: long rows of *adobe* walls, somewhat forbidding in their plain severity, with only windows and doors

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to relieve the blank white walls, forming three sides of a square. But one has only to pass through the entrance into the *patio* within to find an entire change. Here the three sides of the court are enclosed by the house, with its wide verandas; and here, in this enclosure, full of flowers and vines and a few trees, with a fountain in the centre, and on these verandas, as Mrs. Jackson says, "the greater part of the family life went on in them. Nobody stayed inside the walls, except when it was necessary. All the kitchen work, except the actual cooking, was done here, in front of the kitchen doors and windows. Babies slept, were washed, sat in the dirt, and played on the veranda. The women said their prayers, took their naps, and wove their lace there. . . . . The herdsmen and shepherds smoked there, lounged there, trained their dogs there; there the young made love, and the old dozed." Such it was, as told in the story, and such it is, to-day. One could not wish for a more delightful place to work in or to rest in; one could hardly imagine a pleasanter spot than this.

But Camulos offers an even more charming bit: the south veranda, running across the whole length of the house on the south side. Here is another garden, almost an enclosed *patio*, so close and dense are the orchards of orange and olive on all sides. Here are more plants, thickly sown and in full

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bloom—roses, geraniums, lilies, cacti, vines, here, there and everywhere. A short distance from the house is the chapel, a quaint little room, fitted up with an altar and several figures of saints, which were brought from Spain for this little place of worship. Here is shown the very altar cloth with the neatly mended rent in the embroidery work, of which Mrs. Jackson made so realistic a use in her novel. Here prayers are said every day by the household, and once a month a priest visits the *rancho* and holds service with mass. Close by the chapel, hanging in a wooden frame, are three bells, once belonging to Mission San Fernando and Mission San Buenaventura, and which are still used in the daily life of the *rancho*. South from the chapel, a little way, is a fountain, larger than the one in the *patio*, on the margin of which are a number of round, hollowed-out stones. These, with infinite care and patience, were made by the Indians, years, maybe centuries, ago, and were used for grinding their corn or acorns. Continuing on from the fountain is a path through a grape arbor leading to the brook, so often mentioned in the story; and a short way farther is the river.

The south veranda “along the front was a delightsome place. It must have been eighty feet long, at least, for the doors of five large rooms opened on it. The two westernmost rooms had

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been added on, and made four steps higher than the others; which gave to that end of the veranda the look of a balcony, or loggia." Father Salvier-derra's room was at this raised end of the veranda; that of Ramona at the other end, but level with the rest of the house.

Here, as well as on the veranda of the court, was, and is, lived much of the life of the family; and when one has such a lovely semi-tropic garden and view before his eyes as are here, it is no wonder that everybody should be attracted to this veranda commanding them. "Between the veranda and the river meadows, out on which it looked, all was garden, orange grove, and almond orchard; the orange grove always green, never without snowy bloom or golden fruit; the garden never without flowers, summer or winter; and the almond orchard, in early spring, a fluttering canopy of pink and white petals, which, seen from the hills on the opposite side of the river, looked as if rosy sunrise clouds had fallen, and become tangled in the tree-tops. On either hand stretched away other orchards,—peach, apricot, pear, apple, pomegranate; and beyond these, vineyards. Nothing was to be seen but verdure or bloom or fruit, at whatever time of year you sat on the Señora's south veranda." Here, where roses and all flowering plants grow with the rank luxuriance of weeds, where the air is full of the odor of lilies

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and geraniums, and the orange blossoms of the orchards surrounding the garden, where everything is bathed in the warm glowing sunshine, life takes on a new meaning. Here, where there is scarcely a day in the year's round that one cannot be out of doors with comfort—in the sunshine, if the weather be cool; in the shade of the verandas or under the trees during the hot hours of mid-summer—Nature once more asserts her sway over us, and wins us back, making us discontented and ashamed of the artificial life of society at large. A peaceful, happy life is that led at such a place as Camulos; a life which is reflected with most perfect truth in the story of *Ramona*.

*Ramona*, Mrs. Jackson's greatest and best known work, was the fruit of her interest in, and labors for, the California Indians. Appointed one of the two members of the Indian commission to report on the condition of the mission Indians, she visited the various reservations and Indian villages, and learned their present condition, their treatment by the Government agents, the wrongs, past and present, suffered by them at the hands of settlers, by whom, in many instances, they were robbed of their lands, and forced to migrate to far distant spots, rugged and barren in great part, and which, consequently, appealed but little to the invading Americans.

The result of this investigation by Mrs. Jack-

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son and her colleague, Mr. Abbott Kinney, are embodied in their report dated Colorado Springs, July 13, 1883, and which has been published, as an appendix, to Mrs. Jackson's *Century of Dishonor*.

While in Los Angeles, Mrs. Jackson was the guest of Don Antonio F. Coronel, a prominent public man and official (having been elected mayor of Los Angeles in 1853 and state treasurer in 1867) during the latter days of Spanish California, and its early years under American rule. The story of *Ramona* was, at the time of her visit, taking up Mrs. Jackson's thoughts, and, charmed with the quiet beauty of the home of the Coronel family, she expressed a wish to make it the background to her tale. Señor Coronel's wife, thereupon, told her of the Camulos *rancho*, saying it was the only *hacienda* in the country that remained true to the old life of Spanish times. There, she said, she would find the customs of the early days when California was still a pastoral and mission country, before the advent of the Americans overturned the old régime. There, were to be seen the making of olive oil, the manufacturing of Spanish wine, the sheep shearing by the Indians.

Attracted by Doña Mariana's account of the *rancho*, Mrs. Jackson, furnished with letters of introduction to Señora del Valle, the owner, made a visit to Camulos. The Señora was away at the time, but Mrs. Jackson was shown all due courtesy

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by the other members of the family, and with true Spanish kindness, was taken through, and shown in detail, the entire house and grounds. Nothing escaped her eye, and as she was here only two hours, her rare memory for detail displayed in *Ramona*, is little short of marvelous. The torn altar cloth is the best known and oftenest cited instance; but the Indian hollowed-out stones which the Señora used for flower-pots hanging from the veranda roof; the descriptions of life on the verandas of the *patio*; the preparations for dinner the night of Father Salvierderra's arrival; the deft touches, here and there and everywhere, are no less noteworthy of Mrs. Jackson's faculty of accurate observation and remembrance.

It is needless to say Mrs. Jackson was delighted with the place, and that she determined to make it the principal scene of her story. This she did, although never once making use of the name, Camulos; and during the ensuing months in New York City, busy with the writing of *Ramona*, her thoughts were much with the friends she had made during her stay in California, and with the beautiful home life of by-gone Spanish days she had witnessed at Camulos. While every visitor to California hears about Camulos as the early home of Ramona (although it is not once mentioned by name in the story), the general reader learns of it only through an account of a traveler's visit to

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the *rancho*, which is usually added to, as a sort of appendix, and bound up with, the story itself. It is an interesting little article, confirmatory of Mrs. Jackson's fidelity to realism in her exact descriptions of the *rancho* itself and the life led there.

*Ramona* achieved an instant success, and has maintained its place as *the* novel of Southern California to this day. Of course, on its appearance it was hailed as "The Great American Novel," like so many other works since, but it cannot lay claim to be that; for fine as it is as a story and as an artistic literary work, the representative American novel must be based on broader grounds than a story of such a confined section of our country as Southern California can give us. But when the American novel comes to be written, it is doubtful whether it will surpass in truth to the actual life depicted, or in the artistic and dramatic qualities shown by the author in her telling of this story.

Mrs. Jackson displayed remarkable insight into the character and racial traits of the several personages of her tale. The first and foremost property of the book is the picture of Spanish life as it was led in California fifty years ago, thirty years before Mrs. Jackson studied it. At the time of her visit, the Camulos house was about twenty-five years old, and the life, as led there, and conforming to the early Spanish California life, well established. The three principal Spanish characters—Ramona,

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Felipe and Señora Moreno—stand out, each in his or her own peculiar individuality, strongly and distinctly, as living beings, possessing all the attributes of human kind, but, what is more noticeable, with the true Spanish hereditary character. It is doubtful whether a Spanish or Mexican author of equal rank with "H. H." could have surpassed her in depicting his own countrymen. Ramona and Alessandro are the chief personages of the story, but the portrayal of Ramona is inferior to that of the Señora. The latter is the real heroine, and is limned with a master hand. The elements of strength and weakness alternating in her character, and shown in her daily life, are consummately brought before the reader, and make of her a fascinating portrait.

Ramona, "the blessed child," as Father Salvierderra and the nuns at the convent used to call her, is a lovely heroine, half Indian, half Scotch (by birth—her father having been a Scotsman; but from her lifelong environment, she acquires the Spanish temperamental attributes) with traits belonging to both the Indian and the Spaniard; but she is less well defined as an indigenous type—partly, perhaps, because she is neither fully of the Indian race nor, by blood, at all a Spaniard; partly because she is merely a loving and lovable young woman—than is the Señora. Her life at Camulos was a long succession of happy, sunny

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days, the best sort of preparation for her later experiences, hard and bitter as many of them were; but through all of which she showed the effect of her early training received from the nuns, supplemented by the loving oversight of her spiritual advisor, Father Salvierderra. Such love for, and devotion to, Alessandro as Ramona showed and felt—pure, true, disinterested—make of her a heroine the like of whom we have too few in these days of all kinds of purpose and problem novels, good, bad and indifferent, but principally bad.

Felipe acts chiefly as a foil to Alessandro, in one way, to his mother, the Señora, in another. He is so unlike either the one or the other that he acquires the larger portion of the reader's interest in him for that very reason. He is less typically Spanish than his mother, but he is placed at a disadvantage, first, from his illness, subsequently, after Ramona has left Camulos with Alessandro, to whom she becomes all in all, when he falls somewhat into the background. But Felipe redeems himself from whatever weakness he may have shown earlier in the story by his long, heart-sickening search for Ramona, and his tender devotion to her after she is found. Yet Felipe has those traits of the softer, more kindly side of the Spanish character, which make of him a true impersonation of the typical early Californian.

The Indian Alessandro—on whose account the

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story was written, and around whom it revolves—is in total contrast to the other principal characters. And in Alessandro Mrs. Jackson gives full rein to her indignation at the wrong done the Indians of Southern California; and shows to the reader, in the guise of story, what was the truth in many places at the time when Spanish California became American, and, as is usual in such changes, the poor suffered the most. In this case it was the Indians, and the story of Temecula, its seizure by the American settlers, and the driving away of its original—its rightful—owners, the Indians, as told in Ramona, is almost literally true.

However prejudiced against the Indians the reader may be, however strongly he may believe that “the only good Indian is a dead Indian,” he cannot read the story of Alessandro and his wrongs, knowing that it is taken from actual verity, without becoming convinced, spite of himself, that there is some good in an Indian, even while he is alive. And if his indignation at the wrong inflicted on the Indians be not aroused by the reading of this tale, he is callous indeed. Alessandro has all the attributes of the Indian nature, untainted by the lower traits of the civilised man, which are so frequently imposed on the aborigine when the two races come into contact. But in addition to the natural Indian character, Alessandro had had the benefit of the limited education that was to be ac-

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quired at the missions in their palmy days. This was small at the best, but, such as it was, Alessandro had made the most of his opportunities, handicapped, as he was, by his hereditary Indian nature. And the result of the mission system, as illustrated by this particular specimen, shows what the fathers could, and did, do, when they had the best Indian material to work upon.

But however greatly *Ramona* may be praised, however highly the story may be ranked as an artistic work, one must not permit himself to be blinded to the fact that, as a strictly true picture of the character of the mission Indian of Southern California, it is overdrawn and exaggerated. Not that there were not Indians at the various missions civilised, tamed and Christianised by the loving, faithful care of the fathers, who were the equal of Alessandro in true, manly character. That this was so is not to be gainsaid. But the reader of *Ramona* gets the impression that this product was quite the usual result; that the Alessandros to be found among the Indians were so common as to be the rule. This is far from the truth. Alessandro was so rare an exception to the general run of mission Indian, even those deriving the greatest benefit from their religious training, that probably not more than one or two Indians, who were Alessandro's equal, could have been found at any of the missions at any time during the

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period of their greatest influence for good. Yet, notwithstanding this, the general result of the religious teaching of the whole number of the Indians was high and greatly satisfactory to the fathers; so that, though there were very few Alessandros evolved from the mission system, nearly every Indian was lifted to a far higher and better plane of life than that of the untutored aborigine.

Another criticism of the story may be made, this time on the side of its artistic quality alone. The life in Southern California of those days, when the country was still unchanged by the advent of the Americans, is so beautifully set forth before the reader; and the two elements—Spanish and Indian—alike in many respects, so finely molded and blended into one harmonious tale that the result is perfect. But as soon as a new element is introduced—the American—there is felt a discordance which is very pronounced. Mrs. Hartsel and the Hyers are not in themselves unworthy personages: Aunt Ri, particularly, with her quaint, original remarks, gains the affection of the reader in no small degree; but they do not mingle well with the other elements of the story. The transition from one to the other is too violent to be quite satisfying, and one can hardly help wishing that Mrs. Jackson had written the latter part of the book without their help. It is true enough—

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this queer mingling of Spanish, Indian and American—to the actual life of the time; but the story might have been just as true, and, probably, much more satisfactory, had it been confined to the Spanish and aboriginal elements. Mrs. Jackson, no doubt, felt that, as a sermon, the story gained by the introduction of the Americans; but it injures the story, as a story.

Mrs. Jackson was not invariably correct in her Spanish proper names. Father Salvierderra's name should be Zalvidea, a name Mrs. Jackson, getting it by ear alone, changed into the form familiar in the book. A more noticeable error is Alessandro's name. This is Italian: the correct Spanish form is Alejandro. The writer has seen it stated that Mrs. Jackson used the Italian, instead of the Spanish, form for the sake of the more euphonious sound. If this were her reason, the substitution of the foreign form was, on the whole, a wise one. It is easier of pronunciation to the untrained tongue. Everyone can pronounce Alessandro correctly, whether familiar with Italian or not; but Alejandro is sure to be mispronounced by all unacquainted with Spanish, and the mispronunciation of this name, with the Spanish pronounced as in English, would be most distressing. The letter *j* in Spanish has the sound of the English *h*.

However, these are minor defects and detract

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but little from the tale as a work of art; nothing at all as a picture of the times. *Ramona* is by far the best story of Southern California which has yet been written; and whether or not it be in future surpassed or equaled, it will ever hold its own place in the hearts of all who love the country, as well as of those who love a pure, simple tale beautifully and sympathetically told. Reading it, one seems almost to live the life of those days; while the various places described in the story are brought before the reader who has visited them with almost startling vividness. Who would not have enjoyed that life so close to Nature's heart? As Mrs. Jackson says: "It was a picturesque life, with more of sentiment and gayety in it, more also that was truly dramatic, more romance, than will ever be seen again on those sunny shores. The aroma of it all lingers there still; industries and inventions have not yet slain it; it will last out its century,—in fact, it can never be quite lost so long as there is left standing one such house as the Señora Moreno's."

So lifelike and vivid are the characters in *Ramona*, so realistic and true to local color are Mrs. Jackson's descriptions of places and scenes in Southern California, that it is no wonder Alessandro and Ramona have been said, time and time again, to have been taken from real life. A dozen times have the real Alessandro and Ramona, the originals

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of those in the story, been found. If an old Indian woman, answering to the name of Ramona (a common name among the Spanish and the mission Indians) is found by some indefatigable explorer in an out-of-the-way Indian village, or on some lonely, deserted, *rancho*, the rumor at once goes the rounds that the genuine Ramona of the tale has been discovered. Less than two years ago, she was unearthed away back of Pala, an old squaw, almost too aged and feeble to move. Her name happened to be Ramona—that was all there was to it. It should be superfluous to say that all the characters, Ramona herself included, are entire fabrications of the author's brain. Mrs. Jackson had no one in mind serving as a model for any of the personages in her book.

May, 1900.

## Lompoc and Purisima

**T**HERE are two reasons why comparatively few persons visit Lompoc; partly, because it is off the beaten track of travel, and, until the past summer, (1899) to be reached only by stage; partly, because, with one exception, there is nothing of particular interest to be found here, and this one exception, Mission La Purísima Concepcion, is of rather minor interest to the average tourist, after having seen much more important and beautiful missions, which are, at the same time, fortunately, more accessible. But Lompoc is worthy a visit from one having the time to spare, for the sake of the stage ride alone from Santa Barbara: it is one of the finest drives in the state, more beautiful than grand, although the latter element is not lacking.

There are two ways by which one can reach Lompoc: from the south by stage from Santa Barbara, a ride of sixty-two miles, along the coast for the first half of the way, thence through the Gaviota Pass; and by rail from San Luis Obispo, from the north. Until this past summer there was a gap in the railroad, on the trip north, of ten

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miles from Lompoc to Surf, which was necessary to cover by stage; but the railroad has now been finished to the former point. This railroad, the coast division of the Southern Pacific, is being rapidly extended to Santa Barbara, which will then do away with the stage ride, but a year or more will be required to complete this part of the road.\*

A third reason why so few make the trip to Lompoc might be found in the fact that there are two ways, both by stage, by which one can go from Santa Barbara to San Luis Obispo: one, the way already mentioned, through the Gaviota Pass to Lompoc; the other, through the San Marcos Pass to Los Olivos, thence by rail to San Luis Obispo. This latter is far the more popular of the two, and at times during the year, the travel by this way is limited only by the seating capacity of the stages run. As this route is more direct, therefore shorter, and the mountain scenery through the pass grander, although less varied, (for it is too far inland to have the ocean in sight, save only in the distance) it can readily be seen why it should be more traveled than the other. The stage ride this way to San Luis Obispo is only forty-five miles, as compared with sixty-two by the other route *via* Lompoc—an item of no small weight with people to whom stage-riding; in these

\*The road was finished and open to travel in the spring of 1901.

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degenerate days of railroading, is to be avoided wherever possible. And, in truth, the ride to Lompoc is not the most comfortable one in the world, good, for the most part, as are the roads, and easy riding the stages.

The day my brother, F— and I left Santa Barbara for Lompoc was in the latter part of August. The morning, bright, warm and calm, was an ideal one for a ride through the country, and we took our places with great anticipations of the pleasure before us. The stage was scheduled to leave at seven, and it did get away from the hotel only twenty minutes after that hour. We two and a third were the only passengers to go through to Lompoc in a stage that would seat ten; but we picked up one traveler at Naples, some miles out from Santa Barbara, who went with us as far as Gaviota. Yet, in spite of the few passengers, the amount of business done by this stage line is not small; there was a fair amount of freight taken, and, in addition, the mail is carried to and from the various little towns passed *en route*.

What a beautiful day that was, a true Southern Californian day! How easy it is, in a country like this, in this charming, seductive land, to transport oneself in thought to the old days, past and gone forever, but whose impression and influence remain! The witchery of Southern California has

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never been explained, probably because it is, even to those most under its sway, unexplainable satisfactorily. It is due, in some measure, to the climate, the soft, mild weather, whether of summer or winter, it makes no difference—it is only a matter of a few degrees; in some measure, to the scenery, the landscape so beautifully blended of sea and mountain and valley, all clothed with the mantle of exquisite color which here is so large a part of everything; in some measure, to the remains of a former life led here, a century ago, and which has left its footprints in nearly every part of the southern half of the state. To the writer, this—the romance of the Spanish days—forms a large part of the attraction of the land. Everyone feels, however unknowingly, this ineffable influence, for it is not to be withstood by the most hardened and prosaic mortal. It is a heritage from the past which all cherish, unconsciously though it may be.

For the first thirty-six miles, the road leads off to the northwest. At first, we skirted along the Santa Inés Mountains, which were on our right for many miles. One never tires from looking at this range of hills; so beautiful in outline are they, so entrancing in their color every hour of the day, so artistic in their arrangement and disposition. But the color and light and shade playing constantly over these hills are their chief charm, one

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that is irresistible. Many visitors to California, coming from the east, are disappointed in the landscape they find here on the coast: contrasting the hills and dales they have left, covered with trees or verdure of some kind, all of a more or less uniform green color, with the bare ground, the mountains comparatively destitute of forest growth, and the great want of the green color so refreshing to their eyes, they find themselves out of harmony with the scene, and call it barren and desolate. Barren, in their sense, it may be; but one who has learned to see the variations of color, ever changing, ever lovely, warm, soft, flushing yellows, pinks, reds, browns, relieved by the cool blues and greys of the shadows; to detect and note the changes of atmospheric perspective, that, every moment, take place, culminating, toward night-fall, with the most wondrous glow and fire, borrowed from the setting sun—how can one watch a scene like this through the cycle of a day and regret the absence of verdure? Yet there is, nearly always, enough green in every landscape to relieve the warm color by its grateful coolness. The writer has never felt this lack, which is spoken of by many.

The road passes along through country given up to small *ranchos* of fruit and grain, each with its little peaceful home embowered in it; farther on, as the city is left behind, the land becomes

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more open, and is made up of large grain farms extending quite to the coast, a mile or more on the left hand, to the mountains, still on the right. Goleta was our first stop, eight miles from Santa Barbara. It seems hardly more than a name, (although there are about eight hundred people in the settlement), only a house or two, besides the store which contains the postoffice. We left a mail bag and again sped on our way. Some miles beyond we came to the coast, and then, for nearly twenty miles, we had the water almost constantly in sight.

This twenty miles portion is the finest part of the whole trip, for with the water—a blue, shimmering mass, paling, where the sun shines on it, to a dazzling white, and deepening, under cloud, to an intense purple grey—on one hand, and the mountains, running off in the distance to a low line of hills, on the other, there is a picture of beauty unfolded at every step that few spots can surpass. In early morning there is usually some fog slowly drifting away over the water, and when this is the case there is little or no air stirring, so that the water is as quiet and smooth as a mill-pond. This, with the light blue color, makes it resemble a lake. Indeed, the Pacific, on this coast, seldom has the look of the ocean; neither has the air the pungent salt fragrance in as great strength as has that of the Atlantic, and this increases its

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likeness to a lake. The road winds along the shore, sometimes a few hundred feet from the water, affording glimpses only of the distant horizon; sometimes right on the edge of the *mesa*, fifty feet or more above the beach, when a grand stretch of the coast, terminating in a headland jutting out into the ocean, may be seen; sometimes, in a great loop, skirting the edge of a ravine running down to the wave-lapped sands. This is no "rockbound coast" here; it is *mesa*, ending in steep rounded hills where it reaches out into the water, the whole covered with earth that gives life to grain in immense stretches, or, where uncultivated, carpeted, in spring, with a host of wild flowers of all colors. There are few parts of the Southern California coast which are rocky.

And this is the kind of scenery we had that day until we reached Gaviota, a little after one o'clock. A few miles beyond Goleta we stopped at Naples, where we changed horses, left the mail, and took up our other passenger. Naples is much the same as Goleta in size, judging from the postoffice, where we stopped, and which should be the centre of the village. Just after leaving Naples we came out on to the edge of the *mesa*. Our next stop was Quemada; then Arroyo Honda, the stopping place for dinner, where we changed horses again, and, this time, our driver as well.

Dinner was served in one of the two houses of

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the resting place, and the announcement of "half an hour for dinner" was a welcome one to us, with appetites whetted by the sea air and the brisk drive of thirty miles. After our meal, and a little walk to stretch our legs, we took our places in the stage again, and started off at a fine pace with six fresh horses and a new driver—the one who had brought the stage down from Lompoc that morning, and which drew up at the stopping place not five minutes after we had reached there. Our first driver, a middle-aged man, was quiet, very quiet for a stage driver; and never once did a single strong expression escape his lips, something one associates with a stage driver as a matter of course. It was a subject of some anxious speculation with us passengers. Our second driver, however, a much younger man, soon relieved the tension: we had not gone more than a mile or so when he added emphasis to his command to the horses by a somewhat highly colored word. "There," F— exclaimed, "I feel safer now I have heard the driver swear!" But I must do him the justice to say that that one time was the only time he indulged during the rest of the drive. He may have heard F—'s remark, although I doubt it. But the horses were fine, intelligent animals, and did not need the usual incentive to greater speed.

For the first six miles after our afternoon start the way continued along the coast as before. We

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passed through Alcatraz, where are situated the asphalt works of that name; then came to Gaviota, small, like the rest, but of some more importance, for it boasts a wharf where, every fourth day, a coast steamer from the north, as well as one from the south, touches. Here we said "good bye" to the ocean, for our road, from this point, took a more northerly direction, as it made its way among the hills through the Gaviota Pass. This pass, while not as grand as the San Marcos, to the east, is beautiful in its own way, and, in places, approaches its more magnificent neighbor: it comes, too, as a contrast to the morning portion of the drive, which adds to its interest, sorry as one may be to leave the ocean behind out of sight.

After leaving Gaviota, the road plunges in among the hills, which come closer and grow higher and more precipitous as we advance. In some places there is a sheer wall above us of several hundred feet, on one side; on the other, the bed of a stream, full of rocks and boulders. There is much tree growth in the pass, live oaks predominating largely, some of them draped with Spanish moss; but there are many alders, sycamores and cottonwoods. This lasts for miles and, but for the landscape, would be almost unbearable; for here, in the shadow of the hills on both sides, there is little air stirring, and the dust rises in thick, suffocating clouds. For two hours or more

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out of Santa Barbara we had been on the county road, which was kept well watered; beyond, to Gaviota, the sea breeze, which began to rise about ten o'clock, was just brisk enough to drive the dust away to one side; so that here, through the *cañon*, we had our first taste of this bugbear of stage driving. Fine as the scenery was, we all were glad to get out into the open country once more, where we could have a free breath now and then. Las Cruces, a little place like the others we had stopped at, was the last for changing horses; and from there the remainder of the trip to Lompoc, some eighteen or twenty miles, was up a long, gradual ascent over the hills, then a lively spin down the other side into the valley in which the town is situated.

There is little of note until one reaches the summit, when, soon after starting down on the other side, the road takes its way through the immense Hollister and San Julian cattle and grain *ranchos*: through the latter it passes for over ten miles—great fields of grain (or stubble, at this time of the year, for the grain had been harvested) stretching away on every side, with, here and there, a herd of cattle scattered over the ranges. The country here is quietly rolling hills, growing gradually lower and wider apart as we approach Lompoc. Amongst the hills are many little wooded spots,

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lending something of a park-like character to the general view.

Crossing the San Julian *rancho*, which belongs to the Diblee estate of Santa Barbara, we stop at the house to water the horses and leave the mail, then off again for the last twelve miles of the drive. And this last twelve miles seemed never ending: what with the dust and the jolting which we occasionally received in spite of the good road, we were tired out with the long trip. Our driver had to make the town, in some seasonable time, anyway; so that, notwithstanding his skillful driving, he could not avoid, or slow up for, every little roughness or "chuck hole" in the road. On turning a corner, we came out at last on Ocean Avenue, the main street of Lompoc, and saw the town spread out before us over the broad, level valley. After a half mile, we reached the centre, and drew up at the hotel, and there we descended, thankful to have ended our long ride, interesting as it had been. At the hotel every room was full, and it looked, for a few moments, as if we should be deprived of a night's rest, as the only other hotel was, likewise, overflowing. Finally, the proprietor's son, who was acting as clerk, offered us his room for the night, while he fared as best he could in the parlor, sleeping on the floor, he told us afterward. The unusual influx of people was due to the railroad, now in course of construction from

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Lompoc south. The coming of the railroad has brought lively times to this place, and the inhabitants are expecting great increase in prosperity and population because of it.

The town of Lompoc was started in 1874. It grew out of the formation of the Lompoc Valley Company, a corporation given over to the development and cultivation of the two *ranchos*, Lompoc and Mision Vieja de la Purísima, together consisting of over forty-five thousand acres. It is a farming region, large *ranchos* of grain lying in all directions: this is the principal product, but some fruit is raised, as well as olives, potatoes and mustard in large quantities. The town was settled mostly by Scotsmen; it is laid out with wide, shady streets, has broad sidewalks, (a few paved ones in the centre), a fine school building, several churches, and so on. It has a beautiful setting: the hills lying all around it, except toward the west, which is open to the water, ten miles distant. Lompoc started as a prohibition town: not a saloon was permitted, and nothing stronger than coffee, I believe, was to be had for love or money. Some years after its beginning, a saloon was started, but it had a short life. One night a tremendous noise was heard, and the newly opened drinking place was found in ruins. The local paper, the next day, had an interesting account of the affair, although no official information of the cause nor

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the names of the abettors of the explosion were given to the general public. The paper intimated that it might have been the result of an earthquake or of a plot of Russian nihilists! At any rate, it proved conclusively that Lompoc was not a healthy place for saloons; and after that the virtuous people of the town were left in peace. Now, of course, as all good things in this life vanish sooner or later, it is different: there are saloons just as in other places, and Lompoc's claim to distinction in this respect is gone forever. The population is about twelve hundred. Lompoc is an Indian word, it having been the name of one of the Indian *rancherías* in the neighborhood during mission days. In pronouncing, both syllables have the *o* long.

But the town itself is not the attraction of this region, nor is it the end one has in mind in taking this trip, interesting and beautiful as that is: the main and, in fact, the only claim, to interest Lompoc can make, outside of the purely business or commercial one, is that this is the site of the old Franciscan mission, La Purísima Concepcion. I think the desire to see these relics of the past, provided one be really interested and in sympathy with their history and meaning, grows as one after another is visited: it is like collecting a set of rare books; you are not satisfied until you have acquired the last volume. So with these old missions—

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as the number of those you have seen grows, so does your wish to see all of them until you have accomplished the entire list of twenty-one, or what remains of the original twenty-one, for two or three have vanished utterly, leaving not a trace to show where they stood. Purísima was not one of the largest, or most important or beautiful of the missions; but after having visited Missions Santa Barbara, San Luis Rey, Capistrano, Dolores, etc., one wants to see the less well-known Santa Inés, Soledad, Purísima, and the rest, and Purísima, as well as the others, well repays one for taking the trip to see it.

After a good night's rest, F— and I started, early the next morning, on our drive to the mission, five miles away. But before turning off on the road to New Purísima, we drove to what is left of Old Purísima, or Mision Vieja, as it used to be called: for the mission was founded, and began its life here, about a half mile from the centre of the town of Lompoc; being removed, after some years of struggle and disaster to the site of New Purísima, in 1813. Mision Vieja (for I like to use the old Spanish names: there is only one good excuse to be offered by those who *will* replace the sweet, soft Spanish words by common, English names, as devoid of any appropriate meaning as lacking in pleasant sound, which is, that the Spanish words and names are so miserably tor-

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tured in the mouths of all who are ignorant of the language), Mision Vieja lies just out of the centre, in the southern part of the town; it stands on a slight rise of ground, but sufficient to afford one a fine view of the valley which it faces. Only two or three walls—bare, blank *adobe* walls, minus all inside or outside covering, and roof as well—are all that remain. From the little left, one can see that the buildings were small, but remembering that the mission was removed before the finest building era, one is impressed, rather, that they were not smaller. However, there is not enough left to cause us to linger long, and we soon took our way through the town and out, northward, through the country to New Purisima.

The way runs along past farms of grain, and orchards of various kinds of deciduous fruits. About two miles out, the Santa Inés River is crossed, and then there are more grain fields and farm houses, until the mission is reached. New Purisima, like the Old, faces the valley with its back against the hills: hills are all about, and only in the distance do the real mountains show. Low trees grow in occasional clumps on the hills, but these are, for the most part, bare of anything more prominent than the wild grass or oats. All about the mission, the land is used for growing grain; which gives the familiar, although somewhat monotonous, yet always pleasing, yellow fore-

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ground setting to the buildings that is found at quite a number of the missions.

There is only one long building, the church taking up about a half; and the whole much in ruins, although, with a little repairing, it would last many years. This ought to be done by the Landmarks Club of Los Angeles, or by some public-spirited citizen; for left alone, uncared for, it will, before long, succumb to the weather, as all *adobe* buildings do when neglected. The roof, of tiles, has fallen in at one end, and there are some breaks and holes in the remainder. The building has the usual cloistered walk along the front, but there are no arches; and this deprives it of the greater part of its mission character; for there is nothing to take the place of it—no façade, no tower, not even a niche in the wall for a bell. So that, altogether, the mission looks very much like a large *adobe*, tiled-roofed, ordinary domestic house, such as may still be found in the state. It is disappointing; for there is nothing religious or ecclesiastical about it: in this respect inferior to Soledad, which is a sore ruin, and fast disappearing, but which has the mission character; for the church is distinct and noticeably apart from, though joined to, the other buildings.

La Mision de la Purisima Concepcion was started December 8, 1787; but nothing was done at that time beyond the mere founding, and the place

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was abandoned until the spring of the following year. In 1800, it had a population of nearly a thousand neophytes; no mean number in so short a time. But the mission suffered severely from earthquakes in "*el año de los temblores*," 1812, for the shock of the 21st December, of that year, destroyed the church, a number of the buildings, and one hundred *adobe* houses of the neophytes; and, later, farther damage was done by heavy rains, adding to the devastation already suffered. All this took place at Mision Vieja, and it was the reason for the change to the new site; for the *padres*, apparently, thought it easier to start the mission anew, from the ground up, than to repair the buildings so badly damaged. Bancroft, in his history of California, conveys the impression that all this was an excuse for the change, and that the *padres* had some ulterior reason for desiring it; but as he advances no other motive, we may feel safe in taking this one as the real reason; for, surely, the havoc wrought by this earthquake, which was felt from above Purisima to San Diego, ought to have been sufficient for the change. At any rate, the consent of the president of the missions was obtained, and the *padres*, let us hope, were happy.

But Purisima was not at the end of her troubles. In 1824 occurred the famous Indian revolt—the worst in the entire history of the missions. Purisima was one of the five missions involved, and

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she fared hardly at the hands of the savages; for many of the buildings were badly damaged, including the church, and a new one had to be built to take its place; the one, probably, standing now. With these exceptions, however, Purísima led a life of uniform progress and prosperity; dying at last, with the rest of the missions, from the blow of secularisation, in 1834.

Such a quiet, happy, pastoral life that was in the days gone by! Who would not like to have tasted of it for a brief time, that simple life, close to Nature, tempered and colored and beautified by the all-enveloping religious atmosphere radiating from the missions? I fancy there are many who, after a taste, would be glad to continue; for there could be found all the elements of a happy life on earth. Quiet it was, I confess; some might prefer death itself to such a life; but others—and they are not few—are tired unto death now with our busy, incessant, nerve-torturing life of the town and city, with all its noise and drive and hurry. And for what good? Because we have railroads and electric lights, and all the other things we have invented to annihilate space and time and darkness; because we have books and papers, and music and pictures, and fashions, and all the other things we have come to consider necessary to a contented life, are we one whit better off, or happier, or holier for it all? Are we any more Christ-like than our

## Lompoc and Purisima

fathers were a hundred years ago? If we are—and I hope and believe we are—it is, assuredly, not because we have so many material comforts and conveniences that our ancestors knew nothing of, but in spite of them; and who knows how much better we might obey the Golden Rule if we had our time and thoughts not taken up so wholly with all these things. They are good in their way and place, but the trouble is, they have usurped so much of the life and attention of the present generation, that there is just that much less for other higher and better things.

Such thoughts as these passed through my mind as I mused on the mission and the life of former days. The glamour of those times is still strong, and much of it may be mere glamour; since even in those days there was, of course—it could not be otherwise; for it would not have been of this world, had it been otherwise—much that was prosaic, depressing, even sordid; but there was, at the same time, more opportunity to rise above it, more help to be found to aid one in casting it away. It is good to visit a spot like this, for the “sermons in stones,” that one may find here, are many.

September, 1899.

## Jolon.

SOME time ago there was a gentleman of Boston who, for fourteen years, had had his home in the neighborhood of the Bunker Hill Monument, almost within its very shadow. One day he received a visit from a relative, a gentleman, who had lived all his life in the far west, and had never before been in the east. It is unnecessary to state that the Boston man wished to make every effort to entertain his relative and guest, and he asked him at the beginning of his visit if he had any places particularly in mind which he would like to see. "The first thing I want to do is to visit Bunker Hill Monument, and go up to the top. But I shall not have you go with me, for, of course, it is an old story to you now; you must have been up it so many times." Somewhat shamefacedly, his host answered: "I have never been up the monument." "What," exclaimed the western gentleman, "you have lived fourteen years right at its foot, and have never made the ascent! Why, it has been one of the desires of my life to see that monument, and now I am here I would not miss it for any amount of money. Well!

## Jolon

That comes from living near an object of interest. Because you are close by it, see it every day in the year and could, if you liked, have the view from the top at any and every hour of the day, you put it off and never go. So, after all, I think you would better come with me, and I will show you the sights of your own town."

Is not this an epitome, frequently, of our attitude toward any place of interest lying in our vicinity, a place with which we have been acquainted for years, but which makes no stronger nor more direct appeal for closer acquaintance or knowledge? Just because it may always have been looked upon by us as an interesting spot to the visitor or stranger, and, much more, because, as the homely phrase goes, "familiarity breeds contempt," we fail to appreciate at its worth a building for its historical or antiquarian associations, or for its intrinsic architectural beauty, or a fine landscape, full of color and perspective such as a painter loves and transfers, to his canvas.

Just such a place is Jolon, or rather, it would be more correct to say, just such a country is that in the vicinity of Jolon; for here may be found some surpassingly lovely scenes of high and low land, mountain and valley. But Jolon is a *terra incognita* to many Californians; and as for the tourist—the writer doubts whether one in a thousand so much as even hears of the place, to say nothing of visiting

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it. Pala is but little more secluded, and Pala is simply unknown to travelers.

At the present time King's City, the railroad point from which the stage for Jolon is taken, is not on the through line of travel between San Francisco and Los Angeles and the southern part of the state. This railroad, however, running south from San Francisco, through the Salinas Valley to San José and San Luis Obispo, is to become a part of the main line when it shall have been extended around the Santa Inés Mountains to Santa Barbara—a piece of engineering on which the Southern Pacific company are now bending all their energies. They promise to have this done by the first of next year, but as it was to have been finished two years ago, and as the limit of time has been extended again and again as necessity demanded, every one receives with doubt any report from the officials concerning the termination of the work. Until that time King's City remains on a short line, consequently with less travel through the little town, and less opportunity for travelers to hear about the beauties of Jolon. However, the writer doubts much whether increased travel through this part of the country will bring a larger number of visitors to Jolon. To tell the truth, he hopes it will not, for one of the chief charms of a place like Jolon is its comparative immunity from the feverishly hurrying tourist. He

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says comparative advisedly, for the camera fiend has already found out this spot, and has made spoils of its beauty in "pressing the button." Happily the presence of the tourist is still a somewhat rare event—let us hope it will continue to be as rare for many years to come.

The writer must here confess that it was with much misgiving he selected Jolon as a subject for an article in this little collection. But as his aim has been to attempt to describe some of the less well-known places in California—those deserving the traveler's attention—he felt he could not conscientiously omit Jolon. And, after all, this feeling of misgiving he has had in connection with nearly every one of the places mentioned in this book. He has been desirous of calling attention to places deserving notice; at the same time, he has had, in some degree, a feeling of guilt, as though he were betraying old, dear friends to the unsympathetic gaze of the world. His comfort must be that, in all probability, the great majority of travelers to California will never, never visit, never hear of, Jolon and Pala.

King's City is one hundred and sixty-four miles south from San Francisco. It has no distinctive features; it is simply a little town, built up as a trading centre for the district round about. The view of country from the railroad station is not an altogether commonplace one; mountains border

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the horizon to the west and south, and there is the rich California color at every hour of the day, but the prospect does not seem to promise much in the way of something fine and beautiful to be found farther on. Yet such is the case, and the twenty mile stage-ride from the town to Jolon is filled with pretty views of mountain and *cañon* and low-lying land given up to grain and cattle. A mile or so from King's City, the Salinas River is crossed: in the summer and fall this stream is, of course, (like all streams in the southern half of the state) very low, but when the writer saw it in September, after three dry winters, there was not a drop of water in sight. Immense rolling beds of sand along the banks of the river showed plainly the great force of the wind when it is at its height; for the winds of the Salinas Valley are a synonym, far and wide, for all that is fierce and tempestuous. There is hardly a day, the whole year through, during the afternoon of which the wind fails to blow, and blow hard: invariably, sometime between eleven and one o'clock it begins, and in less than an hour it is a raging tornado, roaring through the trees and around buildings, and filling the air with blinding clouds of dust. Strange does it seem to have such winds with the deep blue of the unclouded sky: and this combination of fierce winds with clear sky and brilliant, unbroken sunlight has never lost

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its power to affect the writer with a singular, almost uncanny force.

But the Salinas Valley and its winds occupy but a small place in geography, and they are soon left behind and forgotten as the stage rolls merrily along toward the hills it has to climb. In September one does not find many travelers in any part of California, but even in winter, during the height of the tourist season, the days when the stage is filled with passengers are the exception. When F— and the writer made their pilgrimage to Jolon, they were the only passengers, although there was some express matter, and the daily mail, for this is a mail route. The driver—a Mexican from appearance and accent—was a pleasant young fellow, and chatted with us the whole distance, telling us everything about the country, its history, past and present, and enlivening the way so much that the twenty miles were passed over before we knew it. The road is fine, hard and smooth, over which the stage rolls lightly and easily. For some miles before reaching the summit of the pass over the mountains, it is necessary to walk the horses, but this is the only slow part of the trip. Through the *cañon* the way is narrow and tortuous: the hills on each side wall in the passage so closely that it seems as though no way could be found through; but each new turn gives a new view and farther on another opening pierced by the road.

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not a single guest at the hotel when F— and the writer arrived there, Mrs. Tidball made us quite members of the family, doing everything she could think of to make our short stay of two days an agreeable one, and she certainly succeeded; for one of the pleasantest remembrances of our pleasant two days' trip to Jolon is connected with the Tidball Hotel. Such things go far to make a pleasure trip the more enjoyable; they are among the bright spots in one's recollections of his travels.

Jolon has a population of between seven hundred and eight hundred: the main part of the little town is about a half mile from the centre, if we call the site of the postoffice the centre; and a post-office is usually, if not in the centre, at least very near to it. It is a farming country, grain, vegetables and stock being produced and shipped from King's City north and south, principally to San Francisco. It lies southwest from King's City, and is about twenty miles from the ocean, from which it is separated by a range of hills. In former days, Jolon was known as San Antonio. Later, the postoffice, which was at this place, was moved some miles nearer King's City, taking with it the old name. Still later, when this was once more made a postoffice, it was given the name of Jolon. This is an Indian word, spelled according to the Spanish pronunciation. The writer heard two meanings of the word: one, that it sig-

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nifies a resting place; the other, a place where bulrushes grow, that is, a place that one would be apt to select for a camping spot, as yielding water, which comes, after all, pretty near the first meaning. Who gave it the name, and whether it was derived from the old mission Indians, the writer was unable to learn. It is a pity to have the old Spanish names of places supplanted by others: the change is never for the better, and it breaks one more link of the chain connecting us with the old days; but in the case of Jolon, the new name—except for the fact that it is a new name, and not the original one—is quite as acceptable as the old one, and could not be improved. Jolon, Lompoc, are not they far more appropriate and satisfying than any English names that could be found in their stead? The earlier removed San Antonio seems to have disappeared from off the face of the earth: there is no postoffice now of that name in this vicinity.

But the history of Jolon, or rather of San Antonio, goes back many years before stage-coaching days, or the days of any kind of travel in this country, except that which was done on foot or on horseback. Six miles from Jolon is Mission San Antonio de Padua, the third mission established by the Franciscans in Nueva California, under the lead of Junípero Serra. After founding Mission Dolores at Monterey, Serra and his band of earn-

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est, devoted men took up the long march to San Diego. On the way, Serra, his eyes ever open to future possibilities, on reaching this spot, decided to call into existence another mission to be devoted to the salvation of the aborigines, and without further preliminaries the mission was begun, on the 14th July, 1771. Palou gives a most interesting, naive account of the founding, and of Father Serra's enthusiasm, showing the simple, genuine faith of those times and those men. After speaking of their arrival at a large *cañada*, which they named Cañada de los Robles, because it was thickly overgrown with oaks, Palou continues: "Everyone having agreed on the selection of the site for the establishment, the venerable father ordered the mules to be unloaded, and the bells to be hung in the branch of a tree, and as soon as they were ready to be rung, the servant of God began to strike them, crying aloud as though inspired: 'Come, gentiles, come to the Holy Church and receive the faith of Jesus Christ'; and Father Miguel Pieras, one of the missionaries designated for the mission, seeing this, said to him: 'Why do you tire yourself out; perchance this be not the spot where the church will be placed, neither in the whole neighborhood is there a single gentile.' 'Let me, father, relieve my heart, wishing that this bell might be heard by the whole world. . . . . or, at the least, by all the gentiles who

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live among these mountains.' " They then made an *enramada*, in which they placed the altar and celebrated mass, dedicating the mission to San Antonio. At this mass, one sole native, having been attracted by the sound of the bells and by the "sight of such strange people," was present. After mass, the missionaries made much of the native, treating him kindly and giving him presents, in order that he should tell others of his tribe, and thus induce them to come to the mission and place themselves under the benign rule of the *padres*.

This was the beginning of Mission San Antonio. The site selected, at the first, was upon the San Antonio River, taking its name from the mission; but three years later, the mission was removed about three miles up the *cañada*, and some little distance from the river, and settled on the bank of Mission Creek, a small stream flowing into the San Antonio. The mission quickly became prosperous and increased rapidly in population: at the close of 1798 there were one thousand and seventy-six neophytes enrolled on the mission books, the largest mission in California at the time—and twelve hundred and ninety-six, its greatest population, in 1805. But, as time went on, the mission, of course, had to see such large numbers dwindle gradually away, from the want of new converts to be found among the Indians. This establishment seems to have had exceptional good fortune in its work of converting

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the savages; so much so that, according to Bancroft, after 1830 there were no Indians within a radius of seventy-five miles who were without the influence of the mission. This is a fine record, reflecting the greatest credit on the resident *padres*, who, to attain so enviable a position, must have been unusually capable, as well as gentle, pastors of their flock. Father Pieras and Father Sitjar, the founders and first missionaries, served together until 1794; and the latter (with an absence of only about a year, when he went to San Miguel to found that mission) continued until his death in 1808, a pastorate of thirty-seven years. Think of the long, lonely years these *padres*—and others likewise at other missions—passed in this new wild land subduing and educating the savages! It must have seemed almost an eternity to them, the never-ending exile from their early homes, self-inflicted though it might be, their only solace to be found in ceaseless thought and labor for their dependents. Such names as these of Pieras and Sitjar should be writ large in the annals of those early days.

But Mission San Antonio was not only successful in its benign influence on the Indians, its proper work: it had equal success in reaching the high position of becoming one among the group of the finest and most beautiful four missions in Nueva California. San Antonio, although a rich estab-

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lishment, was not so rich in this world's goods as Santa Barbara, Capistrano and San Luis Rey, the other three in this group; consequently its buildings were smaller and less magnificent architecturally; but in simple, absolute beauty of design, and arrangement of all the buildings comprising the central cluster around the church, it was not excelled, if, indeed, it was equaled, by the other missions farther south. Travelers of those days who visited this less accessible community were unanimous in their praise of this feature of San Antonio. Doubtless this, too, went far to mitigate the utter isolation the *padres* felt and suffered during the whole period of their expatriation. The church which is at present standing, still almost, but for the roof, intact, was begun about 1809 or 1810; but it was long in building, not being completed, so far as any record of it is known, before 1820, making it the same age from completion as the church at Santa Barbara, although the building of the latter required only four years.

The Cañada de los Robles is rightly named, but the name tells nothing of the exceeding beauty to be found here. Here, as in some other places in the state, the country greatly resembles that of an English park: the ground, clear for the most part of all undergrowth except the carpet of grass or, where under cultivation, either of grain in growth or, after harvest, of the remaining short stubble,

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is dotted, here and there,—now thickly and in grove-like masses, now thinly scattered or at wide intervals,—with great, irregular, picturesque oaks, some of them draped with Spanish moss, some with an occasional bright scarlet oak-apple among the sombre green branches, some standing grandly in their own native strength, not yet undermined by their parasitic enemies. The artistic arrangement of these trees, scattered over the land as Nature has planted them, is remarkable, and could not be improved by any handiwork of man. Framing in this charming view, and adding the finishing touch, is the background of hills, running around half of the horizon. Beginning at the left, toward the east, they lie off in the distance on the other side of the river, long, low masses of dark purple-blue and grey, flushed, here and there, by light, warm spots of pinky yellow, as the sun shines on their exposed surfaces. Gradually, as they reach the front and approach the right and southwest, they become higher and nearer; the blue grows deeper and more purple, with, here and there, an approach to green, where the trees and under-growth become dense on their sides. Just before reaching the extreme right, there is a break in the chain of hills, where they seem to draw apart to allow a glimpse between and beyond them; and here, far away, rising in its majesty up, up into the bright blue sky is the mighty mass of Santa Lucia

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Mountain, the highest peak of the range of the same name, six thousand feet above the sea. Here, in all its beauty and splendor, pale, exquisite blue in the distance, and from the top almost to its very roots, is it revealed to us, glimpses, fragmentary and tantalising only, of which we had on the drive from King's City. Here is the culminating point in this picture of loveliness unrolled before our gaze.

Here is the culminating point, and here is the very spot the *padres* selected for their mission, when they removed it from the river to the bank of Mission Creek. As one approaches the mission from the road, it defines itself more and more as a distinct element in the view: the hills again, as, earlier, they parted to allow us a glimpse of Mt. Santa Lucía, seem to distribute themselves on either side, as though realising that here, at least, they are subordinate and must not obtrude. This brings Santa Lucía into view, directly behind the mission, and thus the two most prominent, most interesting, most beautiful objects in the landscape are brought together in one perfect whole: Mt. Santa Lucia—Nature's grandest creation for miles around; Mission San Antonio—man's noblest, most artistic handiwork between Santa Barbara and Carmelo.

So it was in the days of its perfectness, and so, indeed, it is still, although now time's hand and man's neglect have made of the mission a mere

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ruin of what once it was. Yet even now, in its silent, pathetic decay, it preserves a very good likeness of what it was in earlier times. The church—always, of course, the principal building at the missions—is still in fair preservation, so far as the front and the four walls are concerned; but the roof is almost entirely gone, rafters and tiles all fallen in, leaving the great building open to the sky. The *fachada* is built of, or faced with, burnt brick; and to this alone we owe it that it remains to-day with hardly a scar marking the passage of time. This is a precious legacy and, perhaps, the part of the mission we could least have spared; for it is dissimilar to that of any other mission in Nueva California, although it bears a family likeness to the *campanario* at Pala, the *fachada* at San Diego and, more distantly, that at Santa Inés. The church buildings, at all the missions, were built in either one of two styles, the one totally unlike the other. At some—usually the larger and richer missions—the principal and dominant architectural feature of the church was the tower surmounted by a dome—one tower, as at San Luis Rey and Ventura, which was of great size and looked strong enough to withstand a siege from an army, so fortress-like was it in its heavy breadth; or two, as at Santa Barbara, one at each end of the front of the church. At other missions—as at San Diego, San Gabriel, and this one at San Antonio—the tow-

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er gave place to a simple front, rising, by curves and angles, above the centre to a point or arch. Sometimes this simple decorative *fachada* formed the front wall of the church; sometimes this wall adjoined the front or side of the church, and became then a *campanario* pure and simple.

Here, we have an opening in the upper part of the *fachada* in which, presumably, there hung a bell; and on each side, at the corners of this front wall, in a buttress-like little turret, another opening unmistakably intended for a bell. But these brazen voices of the mission are now no more: mission bells were, perhaps, (next to the roof tiles), the easiest thing to purloin, and we find none at any of the deserted missions. The remainder of the church, barring the roof, is still in fairly good condition; but now that the roof is so nearly gone, the church walls—unprotected and exposed to the rains of each recurring year—will soon begin to melt away, crumbling down to the ground, from which they were made, a heap of *adobe* scarcely distinguishable from the soil. Were the roof replaced and kept in repair, the entire building would last another eighty or hundred years; but who will do this worthy work? Where is the “Landmarks Club” of the north to follow the good example set by the club of that name in Los Angeles? Cannot San Francisco—a city three times the size of Los Angeles—raise money enough to rescue this

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mission from total destruction? If it ever be done, now is the time. To-day, the roof could be replaced and the rest of the mission repaired and conserved for a few—probably three—thousand dollars. Ten years hence, five times that sum will not repair it, simply because there will be nothing, or, at most, very little, left to repair.

Adjoining the church, we find the long cloistered building. The rows of pillars and arches, faced with burnt brick, are in good preservation; but the rooms of the building are badly ruined, the roof pierced with great holes and rapidly going the way of the church roof. The building forms one side of the square enclosing the *patio*; the church nearly the whole of another side. The rest is a mass of ruined walls, some having still a few remnants of tiled roof, but the larger number merely mounds of earth, each year bringing them more nearly to the level of the ground. In front are the remains of walls once enclosing a large square of twelve hundred feet on a side. Two or three white *adobe*, tiled-roofed little houses are still standing, and from these and the ruined walls a dim idea of the former extent of the mission may be gathered.

San Fernando, Santa Inés, Pala, San Antonio—these are only a few of the missions which were built in exceptionally beautiful and commanding spots, although all were peculiarly favored in this

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respect. The four mentioned, however, are perhaps (at least the writer ranks them so) the ones to bear the palm of greatest landscape beauty in their setting. For long, Pala held first place in the writer's mind, with San Fernando a close second; but San Antonio had not been seen then. Now, five years later, on visiting Jolon, San Antonio has usurped the place which Pala once filled. The scenery, although, taken together, not so grand as that at Pala, is as lovely in arrangement and chiaroscuro, and more charming in color; while the ruined mission is far more interesting, as a picturesque object, than is the *asistencia* at Pala, quaint and curious as that be.

This unerring taste—instinct it more properly might be called in the case of the Spanish—is one of the most striking things noted in connection with the missions. Not one (and the writer has seen all but three of the missions, or the sites they once occupied) fails in being placed on the most beautiful spot to be found in its vicinity for miles around. Whether standing boldly near the sea, nestled among the hills, embowered in a park-like valley, or built upon the shrubby bank of a stream—it was the same happy selection in the case of all: and it has become a well-understood saying among Californians that where a mission is there is the finest part of the country in that neighborhood. Not that the missions have made use of all of the

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most beautiful places in the ground covered by them,—it would take many times twenty-one missions to occupy all of the most picturesque parts of the southern half of the state,—but that no other lovelier spots suitable for habitation and cultivation, than those occupied by the missions, can be found in the state is not to be denied.

The *padres*, as said before, passed a lonely life in this almost uninhabited country, uninhabited, that is, by more than a very small number of people other than the aboriginal savages. Incessant labor for the growth and prosperity of their missions, together with the innocent pleasure they must have taken in the striving to make the church and buildings as beautiful architecturally, and as much a part of their natural setting, as possible, went far to soften and assuage the poignant homesickness they could not fail to feel time and time again. But there was assuredly still another thing acting as a soothing and healing balm on their home-sick hearts—the environment of their establishments, whether of sea or plain or, as here, of purple hill and rushing stream. Endowed, as the fathers must have been, with a great love for the beautiful in Nature, of whatever description, a scene like this at San Antonio, unrolled before their gaze from morn till eve, in bright sunshine and under cloudy grey, summer and winter, year after year, how it must have grown upon them, have become almost a part of their very being! So that,

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at last—though they would not have confessed such a thing, would not, probably, have been able to resolve it into distinct thought—they could less easily have suffered separation from the mission than that earlier separation from the home of their younger days. And to one visiting the mission at the present time, as it stands, quiet and deserted, giving no hint of the busy, happy days three-quarters of a century ago, when the country for miles around throbbed with the hum of industry and labor—to one visiting the mission now, there comes a peace, stilling whatever questioning, whatever unrest or sorrow, or hurried turmoil of mind or heart there may be—stilling for a time only, perhaps; but leaving its trace, so that the influence for good bestowed by the mission will, perhaps, be felt in after days and in far distant lands. These places have not lost all power, even in their death; for to the thoughtful person they yet speak, clearly and with the assurance of experience, telling him that there is another, other than the material, life, to be led in this world, and that he who shall give himself to this higher and better life, in however slight a degree, by just so much will he experience in this world the glorified life of the hereafter. The missions are eloquent in their decay. Let us keep them with us so long as may be, for nothing can take their place.

October, 1900.

## San Juan Bautista

WITH the exceptions of Monterey and Jolon, the missions north of San Luis Obispo are inferior in interest and importance, from an archæological and pictorial point of view, to those found south of that dividing line. Mission buildings, like San Luis Rey, Capistrano and Santa Barbara, have not their counterparts in the northern part of the field of mission labor. This was due to several causes: partly, because the southern missions were, taken as a whole, earlier in existence, and thus had a longer life of growth and usefulness; partly, because the Indians in that region were milder and less unruly, so leaving to the *padres* more time for the creation of their finest architectural works; and just because the Indians were more tractable, they afforded the *padres* a greater number of laborers for the erection of the immense piles we find at some of the more southern missions. Mission San Juan Bautista is not an exception to this rule, although it is well preserved and still in use, as well as, at the same time, situated in a country full of historical interest.

Notwithstanding San Juan Bautista is less than

## San Juan Bautista

four hours from San Francisco, and is most easily reached by rail and a short stage ride of but six miles, very few persons, either tourists or dwellers in the state, take the trouble to visit it. This is unfortunate, for a stop of merely a day would well repay one for the slight expenditure in time and effort. And, certainly, one in sympathy with the early history of the state should not omit this place, either in regard to the mission or the town itself.

Leaving the train at Sargent's, the stage is taken for the six miles' drive to San Juan Bautista. This stage ride is a distinctively unique feature of the trip. The country traversed has nothing singular to attract and hold the attention of the passers-by: it has all the prevailing characteristics of the country in this part of the state; gently rolling hills opening out, here and there, into valleys which have been brought to a high state of cultivation; for this part of San Benito County is but a continuation of Santa Clara County, bordering it on the north, and which is considered to be the garden spot of California. The land is devoted to fruit and grain, chiefly the former, for which it is particularly well adapted.

But the unique feature of the ride is that afforded by the driver. Mark Reagan is one of the now small and rapidly vanishing class of stage drivers who were a power in the palmy days of stage driv-

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ing many years ago. Reagan was, in early times, a driver on the old overland route; he has run the stage between Sargent's and San Juan for over twenty years,\* and in that time has stored up and remembered a fund of historical and local information pertaining, not only to San Juan Bautista, but to San Benito County generally. This, it is his pride and pleasure to relate, with circumstantial minuteness, to any passenger who may show an interest in the early history of the country; and this it is which gives the ride from Sargent's its peculiar attraction. History, legend, antiquarian lore, gossip, it matters not under what head the traveler may wish enlightenment, Reagan is ready with the desired information, and imparts it gladly.

San Juan Bautista is a small, quiet town, with a large proportion of Mexican inhabitants. Like nearly all California towns which are not situated on the railroad, it has not kept up in population and the general activity brought by that potent factor in modern life. Before the railroad was built through Sargent's, San Juan had a thriving population of some two thousand souls: then the railroad came to the neighboring town, with the inevitable result of drawing away a large proportion of the community; so that the population dwindled, in

\*Assuming that he is still at his post. The writer visited San Juan in 1895, at which time Mark had completed some seventeen years of service.

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later years, to as low a figure as five hundred and under. A good part of the loss sustained may not have been an unmixed evil; for the class of people attracted, in such cases, by the greater life and rush of a railroad town, are, usually, the class most easily spared, and it can hardly have been different in the case of San Juan. But the result apparent to the transient visitor is that of the calm, quiet life incident to an agricultural community; and San Juan dozes on during the long summers and mild winters of this state, with scarcely a thought more enlivening than that of crops and the market.

The town is scattered over a large extent of territory, necessitated by the immense farms in cultivation; so that it hardly seems to be a town at all until one reaches the old *plaza* and draws up at the hotel facing it on one side. The *plaza* is the social centre of the town. On one side, taking up the whole length, are the church and the priest's dwelling; the hotel occupies part of another side; while a large building, in which is a hall, devoted to dances and other festive gatherings, is on a third, opposite the church. The fourth side is vacant, a fence shutting off the outside land, which, at this point, slopes away for many miles.

To become in sympathy with a place of interest, the traveler must have a comfortable inn where all creature wants may be found: otherwise the effort to derive pleasure and advantage from sight-seeing

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is too great for any but the most hardened. Tourists, nowadays, demand and expect the best of everything; and if it is not furnished them—"good bye" to the place so short-sighted in its policy; it is dead to the traveling world. San Juan, however, is not one of these: the hotel on the *plaza* is a pleasant, well-kept, comfortable establishment, and is patronised by the few San Francisco people who ever come to this place, either for a short stay, or to spend the summer months. It is a long, plain building, nearly a hundred years old, with a balcony the whole length of the front. Next door to the hotel, taking up the remainder of this side of the *plaza*, is the old Spanish house of General Castro, of the last Mexican and first American days of the province. The house is built in the simple style of the early days, a plain, two-storied front with overhanging balcony, the whole set back some feet from the street, affording room for grounds almost overrun with shrubbery and flowering plants of many kinds. It is a most interesting relic of Mexican days, and is kept carefully without change or alteration of any kind.

Wandering about this old town, and viewing the buildings and historic relics of former times, one is transported back to the earlier life of Mexican days, when all—the people, customs, buildings, everything, not excepting the landscape itself—proclaimed that this was, indeed, a foreign land.

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Three score years and ten, the span of a human life, is a very short time in the life of a country, although so much may occur during it; and that makes it so difficult to realise that only a mere seventy years ago this country was in its richest and most flourishing state under the flag of Spain. The missions were then at the height of their power and usefulness, having each its community of Indian neophytes, numbering, in several instances, more than a thousand converts to Christianity; the people—that is, the Spanish and Mexican pioneers to the country—were living their lives of happy welfare in their quiet land, content with each other and caring not for the ways of the outside world; the Indians, too, gathered at the missions, where they were taught Christianity and the arts of peace, came in for their share of the general happiness; for, though they were made to do as their masters bade, and were, in reality, slaves in all but in name, they were, for the most part, treated kindly by the *padres*; and their condition, certainly, was far better than their earlier savage, brutish state.

Those early days in California, the days when Spain was in control, and the *padres* practically ruled the land, have left their trace in many parts of the southern half of the state. Yet it is fast disappearing, and, although it will never be entirely obliterated, the remains of the former times are growing less unceasingly. This is to be regret-

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ted; but it cannot be entirely prevented, for ruined *adobe* buildings must, in course of time, succumb to the weather. Missions like Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and this one of San Juan Bautista, being occupied and in continual use, are kept in repair, and may last a century or two longer before their day of usefulness be over; so that there will always be (so far as this generation is concerned, and the next as well) some spots where the past life—that quiet, pastoral, romantic life—may be conjured up by the imaginative being.

But in this relentless modern life of the present day, sentiment has small place, and such things as *adobe* ruins—useless from the standpoint of the utilitarian—have frequently to make way for, so-called, modern progress. This has done away with a good deal that should have been preserved. However, a new and better sentiment toward the remains of former days of whatever kind has, within the past few years, been evoked, and now, all are alike eager in the safe-guarding of their treasures of the past. It is a cause for rejoicing for all who love the early history of the state that this is so.

As in all mission towns, the mission here is the great feature of attraction. At first sight, it is a disappointment, for it has been much repaired and—the inevitable result—altered. This, together with what was said at the beginning of this article, that the northern missions are, as a rule, less im-

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portant, historically, and less valuable, artistically, combine to relegate Mission San Juan Bautista to a minor place in the list of missions. Yet it has its individual valuable details, changed as it has been by the years and the hand of man.

Only the church and the adjoining long building remain of the original ecclesiastical settlement. The church is the more disappointing of the two: the walls are the old *adobe* walls; but the former tiled roof had to be removed in order to make repairs, and, for lack of funds, was not replaced, but a shingle roof put on instead, detracting, of course, greatly from the peculiar character of the building. A shingle roof does not seem appropriate, for one never learns to associate any other than a roof of tiles with these old Spanish buildings. In repairing the roof, the tiles were removed very carefully and stacked up by the side of the church, in anticipation of the time when the parish could spare the money requisite to restore them to their proper place. But far worse than the shingle roof is the repairing the tower has undergone. This tower was badly injured during an earthquake which occurred in 1836, and was repaired by converting the *adobe* dome into a square, wooden tower, capped by a most prosaic, inappropriate, ugly spire of wood. Anything more incongruous than this tower and spire—reminding one most forcibly of the old-fashioned New England meeting house—sur-

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mounting an *adobe* church built in the combined Moorish and Christian style of architecture of old Spain, it would be impossible to find. This, however, is said from the point of view of artistic good taste alone: the parish is a poor one, and, doubtless, the expense of repairing the damage, done by the earthquake, in this manner, was much less than what would have been required to restore the original dome to a safe condition.

Adjoining the church is the usual long, low building, containing the rooms of the resident father. It is graced, the whole length of the front, by the cloistered passage, which here—as at all the missions where this feature of building is present—by its round arches and square, massive pillars, lends great dignity to, as well as relieves the monotony of, the otherwise simple front. One learns, in time, to associate this long cloister of arches, unrelieved by any moulding or other ornamentation, with these missions; it becomes, in a sense, a feature of church architecture: so that, when we find a mission, as Purísima, for instance, with the covered walk, it is true, but having no arches, it is with a distinct sense of loss we view it.

The interior of the church is simply, but pleasingly arranged and decorated. The main altar is brilliant with red, green and gold, but the remainder is quite plain. The side walls are left as built, and are plain white, but the ceiling has been new-

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ly decorated. Not more than half of the floor space is provided with seats; rather painful evidence of the present small size of the parish, contrasting with the congregations that used to flock hither in days gone by. Very probably many of the congregation used to stand in the rear; but, at present, twice the number usually attending mass could be seated comfortably. In the chancel, marked by a stone slab, is the grave of Estéban Tapis, one of the early presidents of the Nueva California missions.

Mission San Juan Bautista was founded June 24, 1797, on the day of the titular saint, St. John the Baptist. On that day the site took its present name from the mission: it had previously been known among the settlers there as San Benito, the name of the present county. This mission was one of four that were founded in 1797, a year of great increase and prosperity of the mission system. Even here, in the north, where the missions never reached the wealth and population of those farther south, San Juan seems to have had good success at the start: Bancroft says eighty-five Indians were baptised before the end of the year; while before the close of 1800, there were five hundred and sixteen neophytes. This was a fair showing, indeed, when we take into consideration the more violent disposition of the northern tribes manifested toward the fathers who were come to

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teach them a better life; for during the years 1798-1800, Mission San Juan was made to suffer from the attacks and assaults of the natives. Although no such dire catastrophe as that which occurred at San Diego, in its early days, is recorded as having taken place here, nevertheless the continued hostility of the Indians for three years could not fail to retard greatly San Juan's attaining the place she ultimately reached among the missions.

But hostility from the Indians was not the only thing Mission San Juan had to bear. During the month of October, 1800, many earthquake shocks occurred in the vicinity of San Juan and caused much damage. These shocks took place from the eleventh to the thirty-first of the month, reaching their height on the eighteenth. Gaps appeared in the ground, and the *adobe* walls of the buildings were cracked from top to bottom, and were rendered very unsafe. The fathers were so alarmed that they dared not sleep inside, but passed the nights in the open air. This seems to have been the worst period of earthquake shocks the mission ever experienced; the earthquakes occurring during the celebrated "*año de los temblores*," 1812, apparently not reaching as far north as this.

However, earthquakes were something all the missions had to suffer from more or less; that was one of the things to be expected, just as much as

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occasional dry years and consequent failure of harvests. That loss of life did not result from the many earthquakes experienced during all the mission period of history, should have been a cause of much thankfulness; that great shock at Capistrano in 1812 being, so far as we have learned, the sole exception.

Perhaps it was on account of the damage done by these shocks, or it may have been because the church had become too small for the growing numbers of the converted Indians, or, more probably on account of both reasons, that a new church was begun in 1803, and completed and dedicated in 1812. This is the church, repaired and altered almost out of all the semblance to its former self, we find here to-day. It is 160x60 feet, built with the usual thick *adobe* walls, and massive buttresses.

In 1823 the population of the mission reached its highest figure, twelve hundred and forty-eight souls. With the exception of San Luis Rey, it was the only one of the old establishments to show an increase during the decade of 1820-30. This was a good indication of its prosperity at this period; for San Luis Rey was a mission hardly to be reckoned with in such statistics: it was an anomaly always in its unexampled growth and wealth, as its greatest population was nearly double that of the next largest mission.

Mission San Juan's most famous minister was

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Estéban Tapis. He was a native of Spain, and came to California in 1790. After serving at various missions from San Carlos to Santa Barbara, and filling the office of president from 1803 to 1812, he came, when past the age of sixty, to San Juan, in 1815. He was a kindly, genial man, loved by all with whom he came in contact. Probably he was a learned man; at any rate he must have had a natural taste for languages, for he was familiar with several of the native Indian tongues, of which he made use in teaching the boys to read and write. He passed the remainder of his life here, dying in 1825, and was buried in the church.

Nearly every mission had, at some period, its own well-loved father, revered and venerated by all. That there were so many of this kind speaks volumes for the mildness and gentleness of the fathers as a class, and went far to render the slavery of the natives (for it was slavery, in very truth) easy and tolerable. Disguise it as we may, the fact remains that the freedom of the natives was taken from them, and they were made to do solely as their masters willed. But after all, as they were destined to be supplanted, at some period, by a superior and conquering race, they fared, in all probability, far better under the gentle guidance of the Franciscan fathers, than they would have under any other rule. The law of the "survival of the fittest" is as potent with races as

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with individuals; and as that is so, and as the Indians are fated to vanish before some civilised power, we can only be glad that the California aborigines, during their last years as a people, had so kind task-masters as the Spanish *padres*. Mission San Carlos claims Father Serra as peculiarly her own: he was the head of the mission system in Neuva California, and visited, in turn, all the missions which were in existence during his life; but San Carlos was his headquarters, and there he was buried, lamented by the entire settlement. Mission San Luis Rey had Father Peyri, second only to Serra for the love all evinced toward him: the mission cannot claim his body; for he left California and returned to his home in Spain; later, went to Rome, where it is supposed he died. Mission San Diego had her martyr, Father Jaime, murdered by the Indians. And so, at nearly all the missions, the tale is told.

The *campo santo* is worth a few moments. It is along one side of the church, and, perhaps, fifty feet wide. The cemetery itself is interesting merely from the fact that forty-three hundred bodies, Indians and Mexicans, are said to be buried there. They must have been buried in heaps! The view of the country toward the east from this cemetery is very fine: the ground slopes gradually for a long distance, until it reaches the foot-hills of the mountains on the horizon. These mountains are not

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very lofty ones, but they bound the valley, in which San Juan Bautista lies, on the east, running north until they reach San Francisco Bay. This range is the Mt. Diablo range, Mt. Diablo, at the northern end, being the best known peak.

But, as intimated before, San Juan is not only interesting on account of its early life as a mission town, but also because here were enacted some of the stirring, though minor, scenes of the restless days preceding the annexation of the country by the United States, as a member of the Union. Monterey, as the capital of the Mexican province of Neuva California, was the place where most of the lively game of politics was played; and it being only about thirty miles from San Juan, the latter town enjoyed a little of the overflow. Perhaps the people in general were not averse to having the excitement incident to the political game; for the life, it must be confessed, was such a quiet one, for these self-expatriated ones, that they must have welcomed a subject for discussion and political action, even though it might involve the transfer of the country from one nation to another. That the life in California was a peaceful, idyllic one, free from the strife and emulation of more busy lands, is true; but there were many, probably, who found it a little too quiet and peaceful to suit their ardent natures, and such as these were glad of any change, whatever it might bring

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with it. And there were many who, seeing the trend of affairs, were in sympathy with the agitation looking to the absorption of the country by the United States.

José Castro was one of these ardent natures. *Comandante general* of the California force, he had, from various causes, come into conflict with Governor Pico, who, in 1846, was at Los Angeles, at that time the temporary capital of the province. Customs affairs had something to do with the trouble between the two men, but the chief difficulty seems to have been that Castro was too much inclined to act independently of the head of the government. Castro may have had ambitions; and, perhaps, thought he could make political capital out of the Americans. At any rate—the whole matter is somewhat involved historically, and will never, probably, be fully known—Castro seems not to have been altogether unfriendly to the Americans, though Hittell, in his history, implies a doubt of this in speaking of his relations with Frémont.

Spain—as, later, Mexico—was fated, almost from the first, (and so it was seen by the various European powers, as well as by America), to lose her rich province of California. Spain, at one time, the wealthiest and most powerful empire in Europe, was to lose, gradually but surely, her rich possessions in the new world. It is a law of nations, that no country—empire, kingdom or, probably, re-

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public, although we have not reached the point, yet, to be sure of this, in the case of the last, from experienced history—can remain at its height as the dominant world power beyond a certain length of time, after which it will begin to decline, whether slowly or rapidly, but surely, at any rate. Spain had occupied this position during the sixteenth century, although she was a less pronounced instance of this law than was Rome, in ancient times, or England, at the present day. But at the time of which this article speaks, near the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, Spain was losing rapidly, one after another, her colonies in the western hemisphere.

Mexico, freed from Spain in 1821, was herself to lose her rich territory on her northern confines. California, originally occupied and settled to provide a defence from northern encroachments, had, nevertheless, always been neglected and left to shift for herself by the mother country; consequently, she was in a defenceless condition, and was known to be so by other nations. This was most shortsighted policy on the part of Spain, for it was the surest way to invite hostility and, probably, invasion. And at this time there were three, yes, four, powers watching, with longing eyes, every move in the far away country. England, France, Russia and the United States, each was on

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the alert, but it soon became apparent that the coveted prize lay between the first and the last of the four, with the odds in favor of the United States almost from the start.

But it is not the purpose, in a descriptive article of this kind, to go into an historical account of those times; simply to point out the salient features of those by-gone days which lend a present interest to San Juan Bautista.

Early in 1846, John C. Frémont appeared at Monterey, and called on General Castro, to whom he gave an account of himself. He had, he said, been sent out by the United States Government to survey a practicable road to the Pacific; that his destination was Oregon, but, as his men were wearied and his supplies exhausted, he desired to rest in California during the remainder of the winter. For foreigners to come to, and remain in, the country was against the express wishes and commands of the government; for, by keeping out strangers, Mexico—as had Spain—hoped to prevent any attempt at wresting the country from her. But this rule of the home government was always very loosely kept by the Californians; partly, because they were glad to vary the monotony of their daily life by receiving anyone from the outside world who might come to their shores; partly, because there was usually a chance for some quiet

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barter and sale redounding to the profit of both sides.

Whatever may have been Castro's reason, he did not refuse Frémont's request, and, a little later, in March, the latter removed to San Juan Bautista. The Spaniards were, however, roused, and expressed their sentiments so strongly that Castro, at last, was compelled to order Frémont to leave. This he refused to do, but removed to a peak of the Gabilan Mountains, in the western part of the present county, which he fortified, and there raised the American flag. He gave out, also, that a force of ten thousand Americans were on their way to the country to take possession of it. Most likely he did this in the hope of bringing on war. It is very probable Frémont had received secret instructions from the United States Government as to his actions in concert with the Americans at Monterey, all of whom were taking their part in the game of conquest; but that he, at this time, acted beyond the authority given him is without doubt. It was decidedly undiplomatic, the act of a mere filibuster, and only served to rouse the anger of the Spanish still more. Castro collected a force of two hundred men, and Frémont, having only sixty, retired, to continue on his route to Oregon. He did not go far, but turned back, pretending he had got into trouble with the Klamath Indians. It is believed that he had received secret despatches

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from Washington as to future action, which caused his return. However, Frémont, soon after, quitted San Juan, and the town, thenceforth, was left in quiet, near, but not in, the lively scenes occurring at Monterey. We all know the result of those days: the cession of California to the United States; but, excepting the sole incident of Frémont's presence there, San Juan had little or nothing to do with it. It is said that Frémont, on first coming to San Juan Bautista, stayed awhile at Castro's house. This is not well authenticated; no more is the story that one of Frémont's men, when at the home of Angel Castro, the *comandante's* uncle, insulted his daughters, insisting that they should drink with him, and was ordered out of the house by the father. Bancroft mentions this occurrence, but it is repudiated by Hittell, who says there is no truth in it, although it was believed by the Californians at the time, and had much to do with their animosity shown toward Frémont. Whatever truth, if any, there be in these tales, they are apparently connected with the house facing the *plaza*. About 1836, San Juan Bautista began to be called San Juan de Castro, in honor of the general, the most famous of that large family. This was not long-lived, and never became a fixed custom, and the town continues to be known by its ancient appellation.

There are beautiful drives about San Juan. Of

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course, the favorite is to the mountain associated with Frémont, and which has borne his name ever since the memorable days of '46. It is one of the highest of the Gabilan Mountains, and from its summit a great stretch of country may be seen. It is a view of fertile fields and pastures and fruit farms, basking in the brilliant sun of the south. Beholding such a scene, we can, with less difficulty, conjure up the old days, and think that, after all, perhaps, those were the "good old days" of this land, and that we may not have changed them for the better. It all lies in the point of view, and whether, or not, they harmonise with one's temperament. Perhaps it were better if more had the temperament to harmonise with those days.

April, 1899.

## Pescadero

A LONG, narrow level strip of *mesa*, bordered on the one side by low-rounded hills, on the other—where it ends sharply at the brink, forty or fifty feet above the water—by the ocean; overhead, the luminous expanse of sky. Such are the elements entering into the picture one finds on the shore near Pescadero. Simple, indeed prosaic, does it sound in the bare enumeration—level ground, hills, sea and sky—large, broad masses, one and all. But, ah! words cannot adequately describe the fascination, charm and loveliness, the completely satisfying beauty the actual sight of it gives one. Level ground, hills, sky and sea—these are the materials; let me try to fashion them into what is their real presentment at this spot. If words of mine can give one an idea of the hundredth part of its beauty, I shall be more than satisfied.

The long, level strip of land is smooth and even, covered everywhere by a low growth of thick, wiry sea-coast grass, sedge-like in character. In spring this must be a deep, bright green, but in September (the time of year when the writer saw it) it was

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a warm grey-yellow and brown; warm from the yellowness in it, and from the brightness of the sun shining over, and penetrating into, it; but grey, and, therefore, cool, none the less, with the greyness of autumn and death. The strip of level ground is narrow, scarcely a half mile wide; the hills bordering it are softly rounded heights, for the most part covered with the same grass of the plain, but with low, dragging bushes here and there. The hills recede into the distance, one after, one beyond, another, until they die away in the far depths of the horizon. Turning in the other direction, the sea edges the opposite border, broken off sharply and perpendicularly. With the sea we have the life of the picture—the water deep grey-blue near at hand, lighter and fainter in the distance, till, where it meets the sky line, it is almost imperceptibly mingled with it, sky and sea melting into each other, the sky but the continuation of the water.

But beautiful as is the sea in color and chiaroscuro, it is in its life and movement that its chief charm lies. Restless the sea is, truly, at many times, but that is not the word to describe it correctly on a sunny, quiet day in autumn. Moving, changing, now quiet, with hardly a ripple, now thundering, as the waves come rolling up to dash in pieces on the rocks below: there is constant change, not two successive seconds does it remain

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the same, but it is far from restless. Here, the waves are extremely beautiful. Standing on the edge of the bluff, and looking down the precipitous side, the surf lies far below, spread out in panoramic extent. Slowly and majestically the waves approach, roll toward the rocks, gathering height and momentum as they come, until finally they burst into foam and thunder; not waiting till they reach the shore, but showing their dazzling white fringe one behind another, three and four, yes, five at a time. Imagine the wondrous beauty of the scene unrolled before one's eyes, and stretching out and away as far as sight can reach: the dark, irregular line of rock, running off in long curves, broken by bold, sharp promontories; the grey-blue green of the water, reaching away till it touches the sky; the series of new-forming, changing, on-rushing waves, breaking into endless combinations of form as they advance to their annihilation, only to be followed by more and always more.

Overhead, rising from the distant abyss of the sea, arching with a grand round sweep and dropping down behind the hills, is the blue dome of heaven. It is the same general color as the water, lighter, of course, and, at the same time, slightly bluer in hue. On this autumn afternoon, it is free from all clouds, except for great, broad, diaphanous sheets of palest grey-white, hardly lighter, indeed, than the sky blue, but quite enough to break up the

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expanse which, otherwise, might be monotonous. The sun shines rather palely through these thin masses and there is a subdued golden glimmer over and through everything, very different from the hard, brilliant yellow-white of unclouded sunshine. It is not easy to tell whether this be a warm or a cool picture, speaking as an artist: sometimes we declare it is the one, the next minute we say it must be the other; but as sunset approaches this doubt becomes less, until it vanishes; for then the warm yellow, almost ruddy, color appears in full strength. Then, we have a scene that is hardly earthly in its beauty: one is reminded of the "bright jasper walls" of the New Jerusalem, when gazing at the lucent water, the hills, yellow, pink, purple, in the rays of the setting sun, the deep blue of the sky overhead fading away into palest amber where it meets the sea at the horizon's edge. Such a view as this is, however, not common: Nature is sparing of her supreme efforts in beauty as well as power even here in California.

Do these feeble words convey the merest skeleton idea of the scene? Level ground, hill, sea and sky—here they are, but idealised almost out of their true semblance in the transforming alembic of color, Nature's greatest magic. This scene would be beautiful if done in black and white; but

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reproduced in color by a capable hand, we should have more than a picture; we should have a vision.

This is the aspect of the country on the coast at Pescadero. The high level *mesa*, breaking off abruptly in the steep precipice at the water's edge, and the absence of nearly all sandy beach, are characteristics of this part of the California coast. Although not so pastorally beautiful as the lovely scenes farther south, below Capistrano, nor so grandly wild with huge masses of craggy rocks, as the Monterey peninsula displays, it combines the elements of both regions, fusing them into a new and individual type of landscape beauty.

But there is one attraction of the coast at Pescadero which is quite unique, and which is known far and wide, known, it might be safe to say, the world over. This is the Pebble Beach. Pebbles of all kinds, more or less pretty, are found here and there, in greater or less abundance, at various coast points, north and south of here. Some are cut and polished for personal adornment—such as the moonstones found at Redondo; but at no place are they so numerous as here. Pebble Beach lies in a little cove, not half a mile from point to point. There is very little real beach—that is, sandy beach—but the larger part is made up of a mass of pebbles lying anywhere up to ten feet deep, and extending from near the bluff quite to the water's edge. This mass of pebbles appears to be deepest

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just at the line of high water, where they form a ridge or bank several feet high; below are more pebbles, a thin layer running out into the water. The tide washes them up continually, they being most plentiful at low tide. These pebbles lie in a stratum running from the hills just back from the beach into the water; and they seem to be washed out from the rocks as well as up from below the water.

These pebbles are quite small, and are of all colors, from white through yellow, red, green, brown and black. The green are the commonest, and also prettiest, of the colored stones, and occasionally a clear, nearly transparent, one is found, which is very beautiful, almost like a beryl. The red are few, and not remarkable; the black, as well; the brown, likewise, unless marked with green or grey, are not pretty. But the white and very light colored ones are the gems, especially when clear: the clearer and more iridescent they are the handsomer. Once in a while one is found as beautiful and fiery as an opal, and these are the ones to be sought for. Naturally, it might be thought that the deeper one digs, the finer become the stones, but such is not the case. It does not seem to make any particular difference where one hunts for them, except at very low tide when the better ones are found near the water. There are two or three places on the beach along here, reach-

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ing about ten miles, where pebbles can be found, in some spots, larger in size, in some places, of a particular kind, such as moss agates or carnelians; but here, at Pebble Beach, all can be found if searched for long enough. All these pebbles are, of course, smoothed and rounded by the action of the waves, and when wet they glisten and shine as though polished bright.

It is most amusing to watch the visitors to this spot when they once get among these pebbles. There seems to be an irresistible fascination about them, and to which all are subject. Staid, dignified people are not proof against their attraction; for so soon as they reach the spot, their dignity succumbs, and they drop to the ground at once to delve among the pebbles. Children, of course, and young people, as well, spend hours here hunting for the gems; and all leave at the end of their visit well laden with their spoils. It is a question how long the stones are kept as a souvenir of the spot; but the writer, at least, can say truthfully, that not one of those he gathered has, as yet, been thrown away. A bottle full of these little pebbles is a pretty sight.

But the crowning object of one's search among the stones is the water-drop, and they are rare. The writer hunted for one for nearly three hours, and without success: he just happened not to come across one, that was all, although, as said before,

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they are seldom found. Some persons have luck in finding these little treasures, similar to that for finding four-leaved clover, while others, searching quite as diligently, will never come across one. A water-drop is like the ordinary clear white pebble, but is hollow, and usually—though not always—holds a drop of water. Sometimes the water completely fills the cavity; sometimes, only partly, when the bubble of air moves about like the bubble in a spirit-level; sometimes there is no water in it, only the empty cavity. This last condition occurs to all water-drops eventually; for the liquid seems to evaporate after being kept out of water for some time. Put the pebble into water; and it will enter and fill the cavity once more.

This is the charm of Pescadero: the sea and sky, the hills and rocky and pebbly beach. One can spend long hours on the almost overhanging *mesa*, drinking in the beauty of life and form and color, listening to the deep roar of the waves; becoming, for the time, at least, one with the soul of Nature, which is God. Scenes of greatest magnificence or beauty are not to be made daily and hourly companions: we should lose a large part of the reverence they ought always to arouse in us, and should find them become tame and uninteresting. Common they could never be to the true lover of Nature in her highest manifestations; but the acute thrill of satisfied desire becomes dulled with

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too frequent repetition. With a scene like this one at Pescadero, where hearing is added to sight, this dulling of sense is less marked. One may easily tire of, or, at least, become indifferent to, the sight of limitless sky and water;—its very limitlessness is fatiguing to many;—but who can tire of the sound or movement of the waves, in their on-rushing, irresistible sweep toward the shore?

This is the charm of Pescadero. There are other beauties to be found in this region, beauties which, though not as grand and overpowering as the coast scenes, are yet so fine and alluring that they would entice many to the place, even were there no other. The little town is prettily settled in the low land near the water, but separated from it by the range of hills. The prettiest view of the town is had from the road to the beach, just before rounding the hill which finally cuts it off; its white houses are in pleasing contrast with the tawny, marshy ground lying between the low hills of the coast and the distant mountains toward the east. Pescadero has a population of only about five hundred inhabitants, made up, to a large extent, of Portuguese—a deviation from the usual Spanish element found in small California towns, although there are some Spaniards—or Mexicans rather—here.

The town boasts of a good hotel, situated on the centre square, or *plaza*, and known among the

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traveling public of the state; for Pescadero is a resort much patronised during the winter season. This should be taken in a comparative sense; for Pescadero lies thirty-one miles from Redwood City, the nearest railroad point, and has to be reached by stage over the mountains. In some ways this is a drawback—a drawback for those who cannot take so long a stage ride—but the advantages accruing from its very inaccessibility more than offset the drawback. So long as it remains off the common, beaten track, so long will it keep much of its simple country ways, unknowing what it is to be swamped by hordes of hurrying tourists. How long it will remain the quiet Pescadero of the present is a question: some years ago there was talk of a railroad to the town, bringing it into close touch with San Francisco and the outside world. An hotel was built on the shore close to Pebble Beach, in anticipation of flourishing business. It has, however, never been opened; and it stands there to-day, a blot on the fair landscape. Long may it remain as it is! The coast, at this point, is incompatible with crowds of nervous, rushing travelers—a combination unthinkable to the true Nature worshiper.

It is quite unnecessary to say that Pescadero is a quiet place. The daily arrival and departure of the stages; the evening mail; an occasional dance or entertainment in the town hall; a bonfire on the

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square to attract an audience to hear some political candidate (the writer had this experience during his stay here); and, maybe, the regularly recurring attendance at church on the Sabbath—these are the salient occurrences in the somewhat humdrum life of the place. Pescadero is an agricultural community; products of the farm and garden are taken to a coast point a few miles south, and transported by coast steamer to the metropolis.

Probably the greatest attraction of Pescadero, after the coast, are the redwood forests of the mountains lying between the town and Redwood City, and over which the stage, in its daily going and coming, passes. These forests are found on the coast side of the hills, at least in that section of the country traversed by the road, and form a dense growth in many spots. None, perhaps, are as tall as the small grove of big trees at Felton, near Santa Cruz, about thirty-five miles south from Pescadero; yet many are two hundred feet high, some look to be two hundred and fifty feet; but what signify a few feet more or less in such heights as these? Suffice that they are immense, majestic in their proportions. For miles, the road runs through the midst of these trees, winding and curving among the hills, almost to the coast. Straight up shoot the dark, nearly black, trunks, until they reach, and mingle with, the network of boughs and foliage, forming a canopy of dark,

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vivid green, so dense that not a ray of sunlight can filter through; great bowers of perfect shade and coolness do the thick clusters of trees make, most refreshing to feel when suffering the long trip from the railroad on a hot summer day. A particularly alluring feature of these groves is the almost complete absence of under-growth; one may wander under and among the trees in every direction, and find no obstruction from shrubs, bushes or young trees, nor from young trees and sprouts of the redwoods themselves. A ramble among these trees is nearly as free and unobstructed as along the open road. The redwoods reach to within two or three miles of Pescadero. One has Pescadero Creek for a companion on the drive, from near the summit to within a mile or two of the town: it is a rushing mountain stream, and is charmingly set amid the redwood trees, as it hurries down its rocky channel.

A variation from the stage ride from Redwood City may be had by taking the stage—running daily likewise—to or from San Mateo. A good way is to go by one stage, returning by the other. The San Mateo route is two miles longer, and altogether is not so attractive as the other; but it possesses one feature denied to the shorter route. The way runs north along near the coast for half the distance, until Half Moon Bay is reached, but not close enough to the bluff to afford a glimpse

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of the ocean, barring only a short bit of two or three miles. This little bit, however, makes up in loveliness what it lacks in amount: it is as beautiful as the rest of the coast scenery hereabouts. But it is soon passed, and after leaving Half Moon Bay—a town of, perhaps, one thousand or two thousand people, judging from the view one has of it on passing through—the road goes over the mountains, affording some fine views, but not the equal of those on the Redwood City route: the redwoods, also, are wanting. Two little lakes are passed on the way, both, when the writer saw them, ruffled into waves by the stiff wind blowing down the *cañon* from San Francisco, fifteen miles away.

Staging is still a feature of California travel, although a minor one. But such places as Pala, Jolon and Pescadero cannot be seen without undergoing the tedium of long stage rides. Yet who, having once seen these beauty spots, ever regrets the fatigue that must be undergone in order to visit them? And as they necessitate a stage journey, they are for that very reason, still unspoiled by the presence of the multitude. However much the inhabitants may long and sigh for the railroad, no lover of Pescadero's charm can wish for any change from its present quiet, uneventful life, where Nature may be followed undisturbed. These, all, wish never to hear of the advent of the railroad.

January, 1901.

## The Charm of Southern California

**W**ITHIN the past few years Southern California is become the Mecca of the constantly increasing number of winter tourists, as well as of invalids and persons in delicate health who seek to avoid the rigors of the cold season of the northern states. This winter travel to the southern half of California has grown to such proportions, at the present time, that Bermuda, Florida and other resorts of the Atlantic border, once so popular, have been forced more or less into the background. Not that they are less visited than formerly—probably the guests at those places number more each year—but Southern California fills, now, so large a place in the thoughts of the traveling public as to throw them quite into the shade. This has occurred notwithstanding the long overland journey, which is more or less trying to all, strong or delicate. Fashion, most likely, has something to do with this, as it rules, in a greater or less degree, in everything temporal; but there is much more than fashion to account for the attraction nearly everyone evinces for Southern California, after having made a visit here, either for

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health or pleasure. Nearly all, on returning to their eastern homes, express the hope of a future visit; many do come a second time; some, indeed, are not content until they return to make it their permanent home, so strong is the impression made upon them by this land of sunshine, fruit and flowers.

Suppose one, to whom Southern California is an unknown country, were to ask a resident of Los Angeles, the metropolis of Southern California, for instance, in what consisted the strange influence made upon the large majority of persons, visitors to, or residents of, this half of the state, he would answer without the least hesitation: the climate. The climate is, *par excellence*, what people come here for; it is the first, as it is the most important, incentive to a visit to the country. But questioning this imaginary resident for a little more detailed information on the subject, since the climate is understood to be the chief attraction, he would hesitate a moment before answering, and his answer would depend upon what was his business, or mental and æsthetic character. If he were a land owner, having large tracts of land for sale, he would say a great part of the pleasure of living in this country is because one can, with but a few acres, grow an almost unheard of number and variety of fruits, to say nothing of vegetables, and all of the finest quality. If his land consist of city lots, he will say it lies much

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in the ease with which beautiful homes can, with a comparatively slight cost, be created, homes that may be made into perfect bowers of beauty with the aid of flowers and trees, which grow here so profusely and luxuriantly. Were our informant, on the contrary, a gentleman of means and leisure, fond of, and used to, good society, he might tell us that one of the greatest attractions of Southern California was to be found in the many refined and cultured persons living here, persons most of whom had come originally from the eastern states. By this he would not mean to convey the idea that the culture and refinement of the *Angeleños* was above that of any other part of the country, east or west; simply that this class of people represent a larger proportion of the population, as a whole, than may be found in, perhaps, any other city in the United States. If our resident be an artist, there will be no hesitation in his reply, and which he will give before the first one of climate—that is, the scenery. If of an imaginative, romantic turn of mind, interested in the early history of the state, and an admirer of the architectural remains of early days, his answer (and this, it is altogether likely, would be the second answer of our artist) would be the associations of those early days remaining to the present time. And in these last two answers would be found two things which, with the climate, go

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to make the larger part of the wonderful charm Southern California exerts on everyone.

Let us take up these three factors—climate, scenery, associations—in turn, and see if, by a little analysis, we can arrive at a satisfactory solution of this illusive, though potent, attribute of the country. And first, of climate.

It is beside our purpose to give a list of tables of statistics of temperature, rainfall, and all the other things connected with climate. We have nothing to do with such jejune affairs; for though they, together, make up a whole, called climate, it is not that side of the subject which interests us. Neither will climate, in general, take up much of our time and attention; only enough to point out some of the advantages accruing to this country from the perfect meteorological conditions which are the rule here.

Nearly everyone has the notion that because Southern California is a mild country in winter, it must be intolerably hot in summer. This is natural, and, supposing everything else to be equal, this would be the case; but nothing could be more erroneous under the conditions prevailing here. That the summers are hot goes without saying,—so are the New England summers,—, but that they are intolerably, or even uncomfortably, so, except for very few and brief periods, is another matter entirely. Heat and cold, although a large part, are

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not, by any means, the whole of the climate; and here, in Southern California, almost as great a factor in making up complete comfort is humidity, or rather, the absence of humidity; for excepting during times of rain and heavy fog, the percentage of moisture in the air is very low. We all know how disagreeable, uncomfortable, depressing and thoroughly demoralising is a damp day during a hot spell in the east. In Southern California such days are almost never encountered; and the temperature which may be ten, twenty degrees higher than is usually met with in the east, on account of the accompanying dryness, is much more easily borne. Another mitigating circumstance is the sea-breeze which, cool and refreshing, blows nearly every afternoon during the summer. It is both more constant and powerful than the average Atlantic sea-breeze, and is due to the immense stretches of the desert-like interior which, becoming greatly heated during the long hours of sunshine, act as a vast siphon and draw in the cool sea-breeze to take the place of the overlying body of hot air as it rises above the earth. But the hottest days in this land are, almost invariably, followed by cool and invigorating nights which leave one refreshed the next morning.

One of the most prominent features of this climate is the large, the very large number of sunny days included in the three hundred and sixty-

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five of the year. The eastern winter months correspond to the rainy season here, but to call the months of short days the rainy season is simply to distinguish it from the dry season, when no rain falls: according to eastern standards, it is a misnomer, pure and simple. Because it is dubbed the rainy season, persons unfamiliar with California must jump to the conclusion that, during all the time included in that term, there is a downpour of rain without cessation. One would think that, by this time, everyone would know differently, but such is not the case. Soon after returning to the east, after a four years' stay in California, the writer met a stranger, a cultured and well-informed woman, at a friend's house. The first question she asked, on hearing he was just returned from the far west, was: "Tell me, does it rain *all* the time in California during the rainy season?" From November to April, the months when it rains—if it rain at all—the sunshiny days far outnumber the rainy and cloudy ones.

Southern California is the Ultima Thule of campers. From May to October, one may select a time for an outing party, and be absolutely certain of having fair weather, whether the time chosen be three days or three months ahead. Where else can this be said? In the mountains, among the foothills and *canyons*, on the coast, all have this peculiar attraction, all may be visited with the same

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assurance of propitious weather. There are drawbacks at times, of course—even Southern California is not flawless—but they are few; an occasional thunder storm among the mountains; a stiff breeze, and the more frequent night fog, which, however, clears usually long before noon. Game is not so universally common as it used to be, but there is still plenty of it in many parts: fishing, too, may be found in the mountain streams, in addition to splendid sea fishing all along the coast. Fresh water fishing, however, brings up the great want, the absence of water, as a lake is almost *non est*, and rivers and streams are so widely scattered that they are not much more in evidence. In the summer nearly all of them dry up to a mere thread. It seems a pity that there is not more water in the shape of lakes and rivers, to add to the natural beauty of the landscape; but Southern California could hardly have the climate it is blessed with were there water in eastern abundance. We must remember that this is a barren country, that only by irrigation can the wonderful products that are raised here be secured.

Lest we be accused of undue partiality, we hasten to add a few words on the drawbacks of this clime; for, as intimated above, Southern California has its drawbacks, and drawbacks that, to some persons, are rather formidable. The wind is almost always in evidence, especially in the afternoon

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when the sea-breeze is active. This, at irregular intervals of from two or three days to a week or more, is diversified, during the winter months, by the north winds, or "northerns," as they are called; warm winds that sap the moisture out of everything, and raise great clouds of dust; they blow steadily for three or four days. A few people find the great dryness of the winds beneficial, but to the large majority they are extremely disagreeable. Wind and dust: Southern California has both in plenty.

Another drawback, which some find trying, is the great disparity between the temperatures of the day and night. In the summer time the ordinary range of the thermometer is from thirty to forty degrees: after a warm day of from ninety to one hundred degrees, the temperature will drop at night to as low as sixty to seventy degrees. This, perhaps, is the average: it is easily surpassed in the towns of the interior, where the days are warmer and the nights cooler than in those places nearer the coast. In the winter months this difference is not so great, although more than appreciable. People have only lately learned the lesson that a furnace or, in default of a furnace, a fireplace in every room is almost as much a necessity here as in the east, and the latest built houses are nearly always furnished with the former. It is not necessary to keep it going so fiercely all the time as in New England, but the evenings and early morn-

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ings are few, during the short days of the year, when a fire of some kind is not a necessity to all but the most robust.

One peculiar thing about the climate is the penetrating quality of the air. Except in very hot weather, the air seems never to become thoroughly warmed by the sun: the shade is always cool, not infrequently uncomfortably so. Why this is so is not known. One would naturally expect to find this otherwise, for we feel the cold most when the air is damp. In Southern California this penetrating characteristic of the air is, of course, intensified when it is loaded with moisture; but this is only during rains and fogs, when cool weather generally prevails. To what is due this penetrating quality of the air? Scientists are at a loss to explain it, although it is usually attributed, rather vaguely, to its *thinness*. When, however, this piercing quality of the atmosphere is not present, as sometimes occurs, there is then a soft, balmy feel to the light breeze which is indescribably soothing, like a most delicate caress.

Earthquakes are not exactly a factor going to make up climate; yet it may be well to say a word or two on the subject, since not a few persons, never having had any experience with such phenomena, fancy they must be awful; and they have a fear of them which is quite unreasonable. Earthquakes are not pleasant, to be sure, but the

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reality is hardly so dreadful as that. That slight earthquake shocks are by no means rare here is well known; but they are nearly always so slight as to be hardly perceptible unless one be in a tall building. Fear of possible damage from this cause seems to be dying out; for brick buildings are put up five and six stories high; although, as land becomes valuable and population dense, builders are willing to take the greater risk for the greater gain. Severe earthquakes are not unknown in California: witness the shock that destroyed the mission church at Capistrano in 1812, and, in the northern part of the state, the disaster in 1872 at Lone Pine; and what has occurred here may occur again at any hour or minute. It would, too, take no such severe shock as that at Lone Pine to create havoc in the large cities vastly greater than has been experienced. Still, as eighty-seven years have gone by without any harm resulting from earthquakes in the southern part of the state, another eighty-seven may pass quite as free from such disturbances. People do not go about thinking of what may come to pass in regard to earthquakes, near or remote.\*

But these, after all, are slight faults. We must

\*Only a few days after this was written, Southern California was visited by an earthquake, which caused the death of six Indians, and entailed a loss of about twenty thousand dollars to property at, and in the neighborhood of, San Jacinto. This occurred December 25, 1899.

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not expect perfection anywhere in this world; yet if one overlook these few blemishes, the climate in Southern California will be found to approach as near to perfection as any place on earth. Where can you find more glorious sunny days, and in such lavish numbers? Where more healthful, more delightful air to breathe? Where such beautiful scenery to please the eye; such lovely wild flowers to arrest the fancy; such delicious fruit, almost numberless in variety, to tickle the palate? No wonder so many persons succumb to the prevailing disease—laziness—and dream the days away, enchanted with all around them, an enchantment more potent than any wrought by wizard of old!

We have said enough about the climate. Our aim was to point out a few of the salient features as they go to make up the charm which none can wholly resist. Let us turn to the scenery of Southern California. It is a large subject, as large and diversified as is the country under discussion.

Southern California, from the landscape point of view, is a succession of surprises: whether of mountain or plain, sea coast or interior, desert or water-course, it matters not; every spot has its own distinctive, peculiar beauty and character. Every mile, frequently, alters the view and brings out new and entirely different effects from those left behind. Whether traveling by railroad, driving through the country far from the iron way, or rambling on foot

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in the innumerable by-paths, or climbing the many hills, this constant change may be found. It is, indeed, one of the charms of this part of the state, and may make up, in great measure, for the comparative lack of contrast between the different seasons, which many persons, fresh from the east, and fond of winter and its cold and snow, find somewhat monotonous. Southern California, of course, except in the mountainous regions, is wanting in this feature of the eastern landscape—a fact which, doubtless, is not a drawback in the minds of the greater number.

This country is particularly fortunate in being so well broken up by mountains; whether they be ranges, isolated peaks or foothills, hardly a view can be found which does not contain some elevation more or less lofty. Mountains are mountains wherever they may be; but there are mountains and mountains, and those found here are, in general, far different in effect from the hills of the east. Their unlikeness consists in the comparatively great lack of forest growth covering their sides, and in their color, which is the color of the naked ground, where trees are absent. Yellow, pink, brown, of all hues and shades, marked and crossed by grey and blue in the shadows of the *cañons* and *cañadas*, are the colors spread out in one great sweep along the horizon. Even the foreground, in the uncultivated places, is of the same general color

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scheme, and the whole makes a harmony, a "*nocturne*" in yellow and brown, if in the sunlight, of yellow and grey, if the day be cloudy. This color scheme, while more delicate, is fuller of delight to the trained eye than are large masses of green. Here there is little green, excepting in the spring and early summer; yet there is nearly always some, and enough to relieve the warm yellow, which, after all, has its own perfect contrast in the cool grey of the shadows, ever present, ever satisfying.

The color of the mountains varies with each hour of the day, and with every atmospheric change. Now they are seen looming up before us, clear and distinct, each marking and furrow in their scarred sides as sharply defined as a knife-edge, appearing hardly a stone's throw from us, so crystalline is the air through which we see them; on a day when the moisture is heavy, they show as through a veil, vaguely defined flat masses of color, or, perhaps, entirely obscured; again, in stormy weather, when the sky is overlaid with heavy, lowering clouds, the mountains stand out, dark and ponderous, blue, purple and black, their tops, sharp and pointed, piercing the pall of clouds; or, covered by their huge, rolling masses driven wildly by the rushing wind; then, again, at night, whether by moonlight or merely the faint, ethereal glimmer shed by the stars, the mountains have new aspects, mild and genial, or cold and forbidding.

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These are some of the pictures the mountains offer under the varying effects evoked by wind and weather, night and day, sunshine and storm, to every sympathetic observer. But multitudinous as are their changes, they are nearly, if not quite, equaled in number by the wonderful color effects that sunset brings out. The sunsets in California are almost unrivaled anywhere on earth; and this is the rule, rather than the exception. Evening after evening, often for as long as a week, without a break, the writer has seen a series of glowing, color-pictures unrolled before the sight. Such wondrous colors streaming from their "celestial urn" are common here, varying with the infinite variety of Nature.

But there is one season of the year when the coloring of the Californian landscape, full and rich as it ever is, reaches a height which is almost unbelievable. This is in the early spring, when the rainy season is nearly passed. After the first two or three rains of the winter have thoroughly soaked the parched and thirsty earth, the ground everywhere begins to lose the sombre, dim yellow and brown color it has worn for so many months, and to freshen with the tenderest, most lovely hues and tints of green, at first faint and pale, but soon, so soon, bright, clear and strong. The change from the sober yellow, and the rapidity with which it occurs, form the wonder of it. Yet this is but the

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prelude to the climax. Later, after this change has reached its height, there comes another—not change, that is too weak a word, but a transformation—at the flowering time of all the countless hosts of plants, whether tall shrubs or tiny ground herbs. This comes quite as suddenly as the former, but the effect is far greater: one is fairly bewildered at the sight, as it changes from day to day, almost from hour to hour. Imagine such a picture as this:—not a rare one in Southern California in the early days of spring:—a broad expanse of country, level in great part, but on one side, and running far forward to die away in the distance, formed of gently rounded hills, not over two or three hundred feet high, here crowding close together, beyond opening out, showing little peaceful *cañadas*; at one place, between the hills, where they separate more widely, may be seen a low, long line, sharp against the horizon, of the same color and only a little darker than the sky above—the sea. This is the scene as it is in light and shade. Now let us color it as Nature has done: over all the ground, both the broad and level extent and the softly rounded hills, lies a covering of tender green, covering so thick that not a particle of the brown earth beneath shows through; on this thick, green mantle are dropped great spots of glowing, dazzling color, yellow, orange, red, blue, madder, purple, brown. Each color collects in spots by itself, as distinct, clear

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and well-defined as though its boundary lines had been marked out with an invisible fence, beyond which it could not wander. It is singular how exclusive the wild flowers are here: each one seems to have its own favorite habitat, rarely sorting with its neighbors of another color. Here are the *Eschscholtzia*, the California poppy in all its magnificence, gleaming in the distance like molten gold, so powerful in color are its yellow and orange petals; the mustard, one of the commonest and most beautiful plants, when found in large, dense masses over great spaces, as it nearly always is;—its buttercup yellow blossoms are an effective contrast to the deeper orange yellow of the poppy;—the brodiaea, a pure, delicate purple-blue; the wild hyacinth, exquisitely pink; the red lupin; the dodder, a pleasing enough pinkish orange when seen from afar, but a somewhat repulsive plant near. It is like a carpet with a ground of green, and woven with patterns of the brightest colors, kaleidoscopic in their brilliant tints. Overhead is the deep blue dome, paling as it descends until it touches the sea beyond the gap in the hills. Truly, it seems as though Nature had made a supreme effort to show what she can do in this land of color and sunshine.

The flowers themselves, cultivated as well as wild, are by no means a small part of the charm of this land. Here we may find wild blossoms, un-

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countable in number, unrivalled in color, many species and genera new to the easterner. The *Eschscholtzia* is the best known, and one of the commonest; the mariposa, a delicate lavender-white lily, about the size of the tulip, but not so thickly growing as to make an impression on the landscape; the *Matilija* poppy, a superb white flower with a large, round, yellow centre: it covers the top of a tall, hardy shrub, and is one of the most regal flowers growing here; but it is comparatively rare, being found in only three or four rather out-of-the-way spots on, or near, the coast. The sage brush, of the plains and desert, is a strong factor in the spring landscape, coloring large spaces a faint grey-white flushed with pink—one cannot help thinking of the bees and their favorite food at sight of it. The cultivated flowers are not different here from those grown in the east, with the exception that where, in the east, they must be grown, for the most part, in greenhouses, or, if out of doors, only with the greatest care and attention, here they attain a hardiness and luxuriance nearly akin to that of the wild flowers themselves. Roses of every imaginable variety are in blossom nearly the whole year round; the century-plant goes through its flowering time as a matter of course; the English violet blooms in thick beds, filling the air with its fragrance; carnations and pinks grow to

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such size and perfection as to rival the famous Lawson pink itself.

After what has been said in a preceding article about the Mojave Desert, it will not be necessary to add much here. It has a weird beauty of its own, a pensive, twilight kind of character both romantic and saddening in its effect on an impressionable mind. Great expanses—sometimes level as a floor, sometimes undulating and rising into hills, or culminating in high mountains—yellow and brown and grey, changing gradually as they recede to blue and purple: the color is subdued, yet full and rich. And here, as in the other places in Southern California, spring comes accompanied by all the splendid coloring of blossom time; for though the flowers of the desert are less dense in masses, they are none the less brilliant and glowing than those of the country bordering the sea. And here, too, the magnificent sunsets of the inhabited part of this land are unsurpassed, difficult as it is to believe it: the writer has seen sunsets here that were awe inspiring; neither are they exceptional—one does not need to wait days and weeks for a repetition of supreme beauty.

Not a small part of the fascination of hill, plain and desert is contributed by the birds. What should we do without the mocking-birds, linnets, robins, humming-birds, orioles? And how could we spare the lark that most companionable bird

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of the plains? Wherever one may wander—along the ocean-bordering country, over the plains of the interior, among the foothills and *cañons*—his lovely, plaintive, almost human song may be heard nearly everywhere, at frequent intervals the live-long day. He is one of the blessings of this land, one which every lover of beautiful song welcomes as heartily as the ordinary mortal the warm bright days of this climate.

Mountain scenery is a large part of the landscape in California. Whether close at hand, bounding the confines of the narrow *cañons*, or in the far distance, a narrow band on the horizon, faint and seemingly transparent, they are a dominant feature nearly everywhere. But, without doubt, the most charming, the most ideally beautiful mountain scenes are those where the hills are found in the same view with the ocean, whether they be in the distance, forming the background, or running out, promontory-like, boldly into the water. Such views of combined mountain and water are not common, even in California; but there are places where this combination may be seen in perfect loveliness of artistic color and arrangement. The sea, too, as well as the land, has its own characteristics, differentiating it from the Atlantic. It is, in general, less turbulent on the Southern California coast; its waters are lighter in tint and have less the look of an ocean than of

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a great lake. Yet it can be lowering and angry, displaying all the awful violence of which the sea is capable.

As in the case of the mountains alone, so with the combined mountain and ocean view, there are the countless different effects of light and shade and color, during the passing hours of the day and night; but the finest, most lovely, are those brought out by the late afternoon and sunset hours. It is at such a time that the scene borrows from the declining sun an almost heavenly radiance, cast over land and sea in one immense, palpitating sheet of molten color, suffused with a complete gamut of splendid tints, hues and shades.

Some years ago, in early June, the writer, with a companion, was driving from San Luis Rey to Capistrano. Leaving the former sleepy little town at noon, we forded the San Luis Rey River—then and at that particular spot, not much more than a thread—and pursued our way among, and over, low-rounded hills, covered, in many spots, with wild oats and mustard, the latter dry and stiff, having lost all of its spring color and graceful pliancy. After some eight or ten miles, the way came out onto the *mesa* bordering the sea, from which a magnificent stretch of the coast, both north and south, was to be seen. We were so high above the beach, that several promontories could be des cribed, one behind the other, each two points of

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land embracing a long slight crescent of beach, on which the waves were breaking in lines of gleaming white, two and three deep. Slowly we made our way, for we had a heavy wagon containing all the paraphernalia of a camping party. As we went on, the scene changed gradually: the high *mesa* descended to but a few feet above the sea; the hills on our right marshalled themselves into a long serried row, crowding closer to the water, until, in the far distance, ahead of us, they seemed to end abruptly in the waves. Suddenly we came to a place that, for its peace and beauty, made us exclaim in wonder and admiration. The ground dipped at a gentle angle toward a broad, level meadow, extending from the sea, on one hand, to the hills, on the other; oak trees were scattered thinly over the ground, either singly or in little clumps; while a small herd of cattle were roaming about or lying tranquilly under the thick, green boughs. The sun, by the time we reached the place, had declined far in the western sky, and though it was yet too high above the horizon to bestow the colors of sunset, it was low enough to shed over everything that all-enveloping, rich, warm yellow glow which comes only on late afternoons when, like a thin luminous fog, there is much fine dust in the air. The scene before us was bathed in this vivid light-suffused color: the ground a warm yellow, almost orange in the fore-

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ground, shading off into the cooler yellow grey in the distance; the trees, dotted here and there, a warm grey green;—or green grey, for there was very little green left about them by the transforming sun;—the hills, on the right, struck with the full power of the light from the west, yellow, with shades and touches of pale blue, grey, madder, brown, changing imperceptibly to a flat expanse of grey, blue and purple as they died away in the distance; on the left, the water, like a burnished sheet of silver, reflecting, with absolute fidelity, every light and tone of the sky; the sun, an immense ball of fire, flashing its beams to the zenith in great broad shafts of light. You may fancy there was too much yellow in the scene, that it must have been crude and garish. Not so. It was a "*symphony*" in yellow and grey: not a particle of the yellow that was not tempered, modified and subdued by blue and grey, warm and cool. It would have been impossible to paint: even Turner could not have made more than a feeble suggestion of it; but it was the kind of scene that Claude Lorraine loved, and strove, with more or less success, to represent on canvas. The writer has never seen its like: he has not been through that country since, which may be the reason; for such places, where everything—hills, plain, trees, water, sky—every-

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thing is in a perfect harmony of contour and chiaroscuro, are hard to find.

"The brilliant orb of parting day  
Diffused a rich and mellow ray  
Above the mountain's brow;  
. . . . .  
Long hung the eye of glory there,  
And linger'd as if loth to leave  
A scene so lovely and so fair.  
'Twere there even luxury to grieve;  
So soft the clime, so balm the air,  
So pure and genial were the skies,  
In sooth 'twas almost Paradise,—  
For ne'er did the sun's splendor close  
On such a picture of repose;—  
. . . . .  
With every charm the landscape glow'd  
Which partial Nature's hand bestow'd."

Is not this a perfect description of Southern California and its mild, soft climate, its beautiful scenery, Shelley gives us? He never saw this country; but, while writing of Italy, he has given us, unwittingly, a description than which none could be more fitting to this "our Italy." Paradise, indeed, it almost is: perhaps many would be willing to forego their hopes of a future Paradise, if, with eternal youth, they might be permitted to pass eternity here. But, alas! even here, as everywhere else, perfect scenes like this one the writer has attempted to describe, as well as the perfect conditions of

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physical well-being, are so few, so rarely met with!

That night we passed camped out on the open *mesa*, with the roar of the waves in our ears; and the next morning continued on our way to Capistrano which we reached about noon. During the morning drive along the shore, sometimes using the hard sandy beach itself for a road, we had another beautiful scene of land and sea, not so rarely lovely as that of the afternoon before, but one that could not be found every day. The time was about nine: the morning fog, which had been a feature of nearly every day of our trip, had just begun to thin and break overhead, and along the shore behind us. There, we saw the foaming waves rush up the beach in long curved lines of dazzling white; beyond, a dark red-brown headland broke out, sharply massive from the luminous mist which, all about,—above, below, over the water to the horizon—, enveloped everything but this deep, dark promontory and the line of dazzling white waves leading to it. Although the sun was still shrouded in fog, its light irradiated every bit of the scene, concentrating in defined rays only on the point of land which was in full sunlight. This was an effect Turner loved and painted many times.

Still another scene, utterly different from the others, the writer had, two days, or rather nights, later, in Capistrano. On our arrival at that old

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Mexican mission town, and while looking for a suitable spot where we could make our camp, the care-taker of the mission most obligingly offered us the use of the *patio* of the mission itself, for the very small sum of *quatro reales* (half a dollar).\* What a delight that was, camping in one corner of the *patio*, surrounded on all four sides with the buildings and ruins and cloistered arches of this old mission, one of the finest and most interesting of all the twenty-one; cut off from the outside world by these walls of crumbling *adobe* and brick, the roofs of red and yellow tiles, contrasting most exquisitely with the walls, cream-tinted with age; the warm, red brick-paved walks; overhead the deep blue sky and flooding sunlight; while everywhere the silence of Nature, broken, now and then, by the warble of some bird perched in the trees just beyond the walls of the enclosure! Were it not for the whistle and rumble of the railroad trains, as they passed by, a quarter-mile distant, one could dream from morn until night of the old mission days, undisturbed by any modern happening, so quiet and shut in is the *patio*. Many hours the writer spent thus dreaming of early times. Had an old *fraile*, clad in his brown Franciscan

\* This occurred in 1895: probably it would not be permitted now, for the mission is, at present, leased to the Landmarks Club of Los Angeles, who have restored, and taken full charge of, the ruins.

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robe and cord, appeared from out one of the rooms and paced slowly along the cloister to the church ruin, his eyes fixed on a vellum-bound missal in his hands, it would have seemed the most natural thing in the world. Nowhere among the twenty-one missions is the illusion of the old days so strong, so perfect, as here at San Juan Capistrano.

This was our place of abode for three days; exploring and sketching the mission, talking with the old Mexican custodian, who knew not a word of English, and dreaming of the palmy days of Capistrano, when the mission took its part in the religious and political affairs of the time. At night, as a general thing, we slept the sleep of the just; for spending the entire twenty-four hours of the day in the open air, conduces to the soundest sleep during the time of darkness. One night, however, while at Capistrano, the writer awoke somewhere near the approach of dawn. There was yet no glimmer of daylight, but the moon, in its second quarter, was hastening toward the western horizon, and in the air was that peculiar hush, that tense quiet which seems to announce the birth of a new day. The *patio* was flooded with mellow moonbeam light, the arches, those "loops of time" of the poet, silhouetting the black recesses between the pillars. Not a sound was audible; even the wind had died away to an absolute calm. Yet it was not difficult to imagine one could hear the

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chants of the fathers in their church, or the bells, deep-toned, announcing some midnight or early matinal service. Everything—the hour, the silence, the moonlight, the enclosing arches, the ruined church rising above the nearer tiled roofs—all was attuned to make a deep and lasting impression, one that it would be impossible to receive, in anything like as great degree, in the light of day.

And this brings us to the third factor in producing the charm of this land—the associations of the old historic days, which have come down to us as a sweet, yet strong, aroma, and, in a more material form, in the old mission and domestic architecture, which is so beautiful to every beholder. There are few places in the southern half of the state which have not some vestiges of the old times; not, necessarily, in buildings of *adobe* and tiles,—these two essentials to the perfect type of Spanish California houses,—but in the descendants of the Spanish and Mexicans, some of the older ones of whom know not a word of English, and in the nomenclature of towns, villages, rivers, hills and other topographical features. The soft Spanish names, bestowed upon many places, are a strong attraction in themselves, and offer a contrast to our usual American manner of naming places, far from conducive to pride in the latter. Southern California is unusually free from the ugly, prosaic, often meaningless, nomenclature of numberless cities and

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towns everywhere in the United States; for not only are there few names other than of Spanish derivation, but those few are a happy exception to the general rule of American selection. How much of this is due to the good example set by the Spaniards? Yet who would not far rather prefer such names as Santa Inés, Santa Isabel, Los Gatos, Rincon, Vallecitas, and the Indian Lompoc, Sono-ma, to the American Redlands, Riverside, Summerland, to say nothing of such names as Castroville, Corona and others? Nearly all Spanish names were derived from the calendar of saints, most of the older places (notably so in the case of the missions) being called after that saint who was honored on the particular day which saw the inception of the town or village. Other names were derived from some resemblance, real or fancied, or from some natural or prominent object situated in the place; El Puente (The Bridge), Rincon (Corner), Pala (Shovel: the valley in which Pala lies is in shape like a shovel), Los Gatos (The Cats: from the large number of wild cats found among the hills in the vicinity of the place in early days).

There is one drawback, however, to the use of Spanish names, which is, that few persons, unacquainted with that language, pronounce them correctly. This is almost worse than plain meaningless English names, but it could easily be remedied

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by having the school children taught the correct pronunciation. This ought to be done, for nothing is more distressing to the correct ear familiar with Spanish than to hear Santa Inés pronounced Santa Ynez (a mongrel combination of Spanish and English), or Santa Cruz, with the English sound of the *z* or San José, with both *j* and *s* incorrect, and the accent on the wrong syllable, and so on through a long list of names.\*

If the old Spanish names exercise a strong, though intangible, influence on the imagination, evoking scenes and pictures of early days, how much more puissant must be the architectural remains of those days! Until one has seen them, it is difficult to believe how much a part of the country they truly are; how they seem to fit into the landscape as though an integral member of it. Never was there a form of building more perfectly adapted to the country in which it was used than that the Spanish introduced into California. *Adobe* was the only material to be had in adequate quantity; for wood was scarce, stone too slowly, and with too much difficulty, prepared at first, though, later, used in some of the mission churches, burnt brick debarred for the same reason, while *adobe* clay was nearly everywhere to be found, easily

\*Los Angeles is pronounced in half a dozen different ways, none of which is right: the correct pronunciation is never heard outside of the Spanish-speaking people in the state.

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worked into the form of bricks by the untutored savage, and was, at the same time, a perfect protection from the sudden changes of temperature; so that *adobe* buildings were both warmer in winter and cooler in summer than those built with any other material. This was due to the great thickness of the walls: some of the mission churches had walls six and seven feet thick. These buildings, shining white in the sunlight, roofed with the red and yellow half-cylindrical tiles, under the deep blue arch above, make a picture found nowhere else in this our land.

The missions, naturally, both those in good preservation, and those in ruins, are the most important architectural remains. In them we find the culmination of this half-Moorish style of building. Each mission was not only a place for religious worship and instruction; it was a regular community, a complete town or village, with every occupation and trade necessary to the existence of a town or village carried on uninterruptedly. These religious communities were more self-centred than is the usual village; for (and this is most true of the very earliest days) they were, in a great measure, cut off from each other, both from the distance, which averaged twenty miles, and, frequently, on account of native hostility: so that, at times, each mission was obliged to be absolutely self-supporting. Each one was a little world, producing every-

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thing it needed for its own existence, as well as ready and waiting to help its neighbor on either side as emergency might arise.

The picture a mission presented to the traveler, approaching it from the open deserted country, must have been an animated one, full of all life and activity, as well as a beautiful one, not only from the buildings, rearing up their walls, grandly white, in the bright sunlight, but from the beauty of human life and purpose. Here was a gathering of the aborigines in all stages of savagism and semi-civilisation, working at every kind of occupation necessary to the well-being of the community as a whole. Here were men making *adobe* bricks and tiles for buildings, clearing the land for building and for planting, sowing and gathering the harvests, working in the vine- and olive-yards, tending the live stock,—horses, sheep, cattle,—grinding corn and wheat, shearing the sheep and preparing the wool for the weaving, filling the occupations of carpenters, builders, workers in iron, potters; here, could be seen women busy in all domestic affairs, spinning, weaving, sewing, sometimes working in the fields and gardens with the men, cooking, taking care of the buildings, tending their babies. The children, too, were not idle—for they had their own part in the general activity of all, doing what their slighter strength permitted, and, then, they had their school duties to

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fulfil, under the charge of the fathers who oversaw and directed everything. Then, to complete the picture, over all, the great white church, heavy buttressed, covered with roof of warm yellow and red tiles, ending in the sky with a domed belfry;—sometimes with two;—the buildings adjoining, long, low, cloistered rooms, all white, running around the four sides of the *patio*, a sunny spot, bowered in blossoming plants, with a fountain plashing musically in the warm sunshine.

Such is the picture of the old days a visit to the mission conjures up. It is very strong at all, but particularly so at those which are deserted and in ruins. Santa Barbara, alone, of those still intact and in use, has this power to evoke reminiscences of former times, in large measure; but, filled with by-gone memories as it is, it is surpassed by San Juan Capistrano which, though used to some extent, is a ruin, a noble relic of early California days. San Luis Rey, but lately awakened from a long lethargic sleep, and once more a home of the Franciscan fathers, is almost, if not quite, the equal of Capistrano, in its beauty and charm. Carmelo, far in the north, is unique among the missions: its style of architecture is richer in line effect, mainly from the large dome which is not a hemisphere, as at the other missions, but rises above a spherical curve into a point; the dome, likewise, rests on an octagonal drum, connecting it with the massive

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square tower, which adds to the effect of richness. This church departs, too, from the usual white color of the mission buildings: it is built largely of stone of a decided yellow pink tint which deepens with age, and the *adobe* and plaster used has been deeply colored to correspond with the stone. The church is a beautiful object, yet, on the whole,—to the writer, at least,—the clear white, toned only by the passing years, of the other missions, is more pleasing and harmonious with their landscape setting. Even those missions—Soledad, Purisima, San Antonio—utterly deserted, their crumbling walls fast returning to the earth from which they arose, are rich in the storied past, saddening as it is to see them decrepit and forlorn. They should be tenderly cared for and conserved as long as possible; for, once gone, nothing can fill their place, and their loss will be irreparable.

But there are some missions which have lost forever much of their peculiar old-time character. This is due to the change in their environment, which has changed, as the country itself has changed, from the old, quiet, pastoral days of the "golden age" of California to the active, busied American life of the present. A mission cannot become a unit in an American town or city, and retain its old character to any great degree. San Buenaventura is a striking example of this: the church—all that remains of mission days—is in the heart

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of the town which has grown up around it on all sides; street cars run by directly in front of it. The result is simply this: the church looks as though it had been transplanted from its accustomed place and set down here, a stranger, to get along as best it can. It is a pathetic object as it stands here, looking out of place and unhappy in its loneliness. The mission church in Ventura is the worst instance of this change; San Gabriel has it in less degree, for the town is a small one, and many of the inhabitants, Mexican; but there is too little of the old *adobe* architecture remaining to be quite in keeping with the church; then, too, one does not usually associate saloons with a mission, and saloons are very much *en evidence* here. Even Santa Barbara has lost something of the mission character: it is not surrounded on all sides, like the Ventura church, but is situated on the outskirts of the city, with the open country to the north. Yet to step from the busy, modern town to the mission, quiet as it is, is not consonant with the impression these missions make when seen among their appropriate surroundings.

To visit these missions, and dream of their past life, when they were a power—for a time the only power—in the history of California, is a privilege one would not willingly forego. There is nothing like them, in interest and value, anywhere in the United States. Missions, established by the

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Jesuits, and, indeed, of much greater age, may be found in Texas; but they were less important in the political history of the time, and the ruins, while embracing some fine specimens of church architecture,—notably those missions near San Antonio,—are not of the beauty and extent of the California missions. There are, too, mission relics in Arizona and New Mexico, but, although the mission history of that region is, perhaps, as interesting (for the savage tribes were much more warlike and valiant) the results in our own day are not so great, and the architectural remains are, collectively, insignificant when compared with those in Southern California. To see Capistrano, or San Luis Rey, or Santa Inés, is almost like visiting a foreign land, and why should not it seem so? Here is architecture totally unlike what one is accustomed to in other parts of our land, in a landscape setting that is, in a measure, oriental in character. And, then, we must remember, California was, less than seventy-five years ago, a foreign land to us, just as Mexico is to-day; nay, more than Mexico is to us now; for, in those early days, people did not go traveling to the uttermost ends of the earth, and California was less known to travelers than Thibet or Madagascar is now to the ordinary globe-trotter. It has been said that the landscape of Southern California, in the uncultivated parts,

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is more like that of Palestine than any other country: if this be so, it is sufficient in itself to lend a strange, subtle charm to the scenery we find here.

Of the domestic building there is but little to say. It is like the mission architecture on a smaller and secular scale: indeed, some of the poorer missions are not unlike large domestic habitations. While there is actually much of the old archicture remaining, it is, for the most part, so overpowered by modern building that it seems relatively very little. The older sections of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Monterey, and other towns contain specimens, more or less—usually more—altered and brought up to modern ideas, of old Spanish buildings. Some of the best and least unchanged of them show us the *patio*, but this was a feature seldom enjoyed in domestic houses, probably on account of the comparative poverty of the general population. Old Town, the original San Diego, is, of all places in the state, unique in being almost solely a Spanish town of Spanish architecture. It is dead to the world now, it having been sapped of what little life it had when its rival, San Diego, was born. It has been left to us, a picture of former days—a picture without life, but perfect in its ruin, untouched by modern hand. Dead as it is, and melancholy in its death, one visits it, grateful to find that irreverent American life has passed by

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and left it to us, a legacy from the past. Camulos is the finest specimen of domestic architecture, and of an old Spanish *hacienda*, remaining in the state, but enough has been said of that in a former article. In the smaller towns, like San Gabriel and San Luis Rey, one finds houses of the plain, rectangular, *adobe* pattern, sometimes white, sometimes tinted yellow, grey, or pink; but usually the surroundings are so changed and the proper atmosphere so lacking that they are hardly satisfactory: so that, after all, excepting merely Old Town and Camulos, the missions are the only really satisfying architectural remains of the old days.

Have we said enough to call forth a dim and shadowy picture of Southern California, its scenery, the associations of old time, and the charm every lover of the beautiful in nature and art, as exemplified in architecture, finds irresistible? Ruskin, with all his eloquence, could not say of Southern California more than is its due. What would he have written of this country if, instead of visiting, and writing so much of, his beloved Italy, he had seen and loved this land, as he, assuredly, could not have helped loving it? But, after all, it must be seen to be appreciated and loved; must be seen, that is, not as ninety-nine out of one hundred tourists see it, but leisurely and thoughtfully; for Southern California is a country that grows into

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one's affections with time only, and the more time one gives to this country, getting acquainted with those places slightly, or not at all, known to the general traveling public, the greater and stronger will the charm become, the harder will it be to leave it.

JANUARY, 1900

## The Nightingale's Peer

**I**N the foregoing article the writer touched lightly upon the native birds of Southern California as one of the charms of the country, adding not a little to the attraction of plain and mountain. He wishes now, as a sort of addendum to it, to speak a little more in detail of the bird life there, making use of some notes jotted down during his visits to the state. Bird life on the Pacific slope is less of a struggle with nature than it is in the east; the climate is favorable, there being less severe winter to drive the birds into warmer lands, while the warfare of beast and bird of prey would seem to be less ardently pursued than in the eastern states. The English sparrow, the pest of our eastern birds, their lessened numbers due more to this prolific bird than to any other one thing, is still comparatively a slight detriment in the west. One need not go far from the settled parts of the country, into distant valleys and forests, to become familiar with the bird life of California.

Many of the eastern birds are to be found in the west, either the same species or so much like, that the casual observer would not detect the difference. The robin, (*Merula migratoria propinqua*), is closely allied to the eastern species, and

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is hardly to be told from it; but in California it is not the careless, confiding bird of our eastern lawn, and is apt to keep among the taller trees: his song, therefore, is less familiarly heard. Still he is not uncommon among the less closely built up parts of the cities and towns, where he can occasionally be heard warbling the same well-known tune of his eastern cousin. The writer once saw a cluster of nearly a score in the top of a tall eucalyptus tree: he tried to fathom the reason for this rather unusual sight, for so large a number of robins in one spot is certainly not common, but in vain. They remained there quietly swaying in the gentle breeze for several minutes, then all took to flight in a close mass.

One day, in early spring, while the writer was sitting quietly reading on the veranda, his attention was drawn from his book by a flashing streak of light a few feet away. It was gone in an instant, but on looking in the direction in which the flash moved he saw an oriole darting here and there among the trees near-by. A moment or two later the bird returned, flying under the roof of the veranda, and at one time clung for a moment to a beam. Later another oriole joined the first, and for some few minutes the writer had the pleasure of watching the two birds flying about, now under the veranda roof, not ten feet from him, again out among the pepper trees. It was a pretty sight, not

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easily duplicated, for the bird, though not rare, is not often seen except for a single swift instant. These two orioles were like the eastern bird, but the color appeared to be a shade lighter and more of a lemon yellow than the common Baltimore oriole. This is probably the Scott oriole, (*Icterus parisorum*), which is less orange than *I. galbula*.

There are two species of the wild quail common in Southern California, the mountain quail and the valley quail. There appear to be two varieties of the mountain quail, *Oreortyx pictus*, more common from Santa Barbara north to Washington, and *O. p. plumiferus*, the plumed partridge, found abundantly in the southern half of the state. The valley quail, or valley partridge, is *Lophortyx Californicus vallicola* (*Ridgway*), found as far south as Cape San Lucas. The song, if so it can be called, of the mountain quail is heard after dark in the evening, a shrill piercing cry of three or four notes, like a clarion call. It is almost uncanny, the volume of sound emitted by this bird, not much larger than a robin: one is amazed at the disproportion of sound and size; and the first time one hears the mountain quail is as much an event as one's first experience of the cry of the coyote.

The humming-bird is songless, and, indeed, were it otherwise, the result from so diminutive a creature would be inevitably almost inaudible to human ears. But the humming-bird does not need the aid

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of song: its fairy-like size and marvelous swiftness of motion are quite enough to appeal to all bird lovers. The ruby-throat, the writer believes, is never found as far west as California: there are several species of humming-bird on the coast, but none of them beginning to compare in brilliance of coloring with the ruby-throat, perhaps the most common variety being the black-chinned humming-bird, (*Trochilus Alexandri*). It is colored a dull gray-green, with purple and blue markings; it is, in fact, very plain, and is not particularly graceful in shape, having a rather stumpy tail. When it rests for an instant on a branch of a shrub, which it will do at rare intervals, it is really amusingly odd on account of its minute size. The writer once found a humming-bird's nest with its tiny birdlings, and was able to watch the parent birds feed them, and in such little creatures ingurgitation presented a most curious, almost harrowing sight: it did not seem as if this method of eating could possibly be a pleasure to the young birds.

Every one who has lived in California for any length of time learns of the chaparral cock, or road runner, (*Geococcyx Californianus*), and its power of attacking and worsting the rattlesnake by a strategem. As every one has heard of this trick of the bird, it is unnecessary to describe it here; but what the writer has been always anxious to learn is whether this be an actual fact or merely legendary.

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Some declare it is true; others doubt it; while no one seems to be certain from personal observation. Fact or fiction, it is rooted into the belief of a large number of persons: not of the present day alone, for Duhaut-Cilly, the French voyager, who was in California in 1827-28, speaks of this same property of the bird as of general belief in the country. Duhaut-Cilly tells also of the bird's swift running along the ground, whence it gets its name of road runner, saying it will go almost as fast as a horse: this is quite true, for the bird has, certainly, a remarkable development of locomotion independently of wing assistance. It is rapidly becoming scarce.

When we think of the birds as songsters we nearly always think first and chiefly of such singers as the sky lark, the nightingale, the mocking-bird, when our thoughts on this subject are not limited to the poor caged canary. England has her sky lark, her sweetest songster: in this country, in the southern states, we have the nightingale. Which of these two birds is the more beautiful singer it would be difficult to decide: each has his adherents, and it may be, after all, more a matter of patriotism than anything else. The writer has never heard the English sky lark, but from descriptions he would be inclined to give him the palm for the loveliest song, while the nightingale surpasses him in power and brilliance. In

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California the chief warbler is the mocking-bird, and his natural song is exquisitely beautiful: heard in early morning, or after sunset, or even in the dark hours, it gives a thrill of delight as one holds one's breath to catch every minutest point of sound. He rivals the nightingale of the south, but hardly surpasses him unless in the opinion of those whom patriotism blinds, or, to speak more accurately, makes dull of hearing. But the mocking-bird has an added accomplishment: during the daytime this mimic will imitate the various sounds of out-door life: the songs of other birds, affording endless scope for his powers, the mewing of cats, and so on. He will reproduce the letter-carrier's whistle so consummately that one is sure to go to the letter-box for the mail left by the postman. One can fancy the bird in a near-by tree laughing to himself for the deception he has practised, enjoying the joke.

One other bird there is in California, not so famous as the mocking-bird, not usually considered his equal as a singer, but which is by some loved and esteemed as highly as is the other. The writer alludes to the species of meadow lark represented in the west, to the western lark, or western meadow lark, to give him his correct name, *Sturnella neglecta* (*Geological Survey of California*). He resembles closely the lark of the east, *S. magna*, but is somewhat lighter in color and has more yellow in

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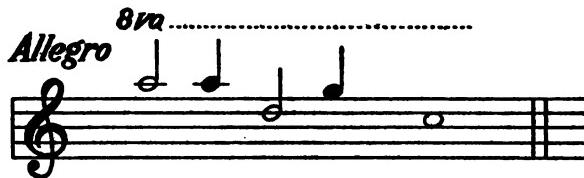
his markings. This bird is a common and familiar object everywhere on the plains and among the foot-hills, and may be seen and heard at almost any hour of the day and time of the year. His flight is rather slow and laborious, seldom more than a hundred feet at a time, and usually not far from the ground, on which, among the grass and weeds, the nest is built. He is not a graceful bird, although of beautiful plumage, but is a general favorite.

His song is the most interesting attribute of the western lark. The vocalisation of most birds is very similar to whistling, and has little of the tone of the human voice in singing; but the song of the western lark has this property to a wonderful degree. There is no bird with which the writer is familiar approaching in this respect *Sturnella neglecta*. Another property of this bird's singing is its variety: the writer has heard at least six or eight different forms of his song, all bearing a general resemblance, so that one recognises them as the song of a single species; but differing from one another, like the variations of a theme in music.

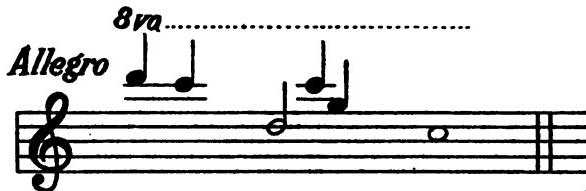
The writer made, one spring, a little study of this phase of the western lark, devoting some time each day for several in succession in listening to the many larks within hearing. He was led to believe at last that each bird has a single form of song—no one bird singing two or more variations. There may be exceptions, but this he thinks will be

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found true in nearly every case. The next thing to do was to transcribe the different birds' songs in musical notation, with the following result:



The first is the simplest and most common form.



The next is only a slight variation from the first, but has a greater range, more than an octave.



The third was more difficult on account of the

## Some By-Ways of California

rapid trill given to the last three notes, which were sung *con portamento*; and as it is not as frequently heard as the other forms, it was only after hearing it repeated two or three times that the writer was certain he had noted it correctly. These three examples will give some idea of the lark's musical range and variety.

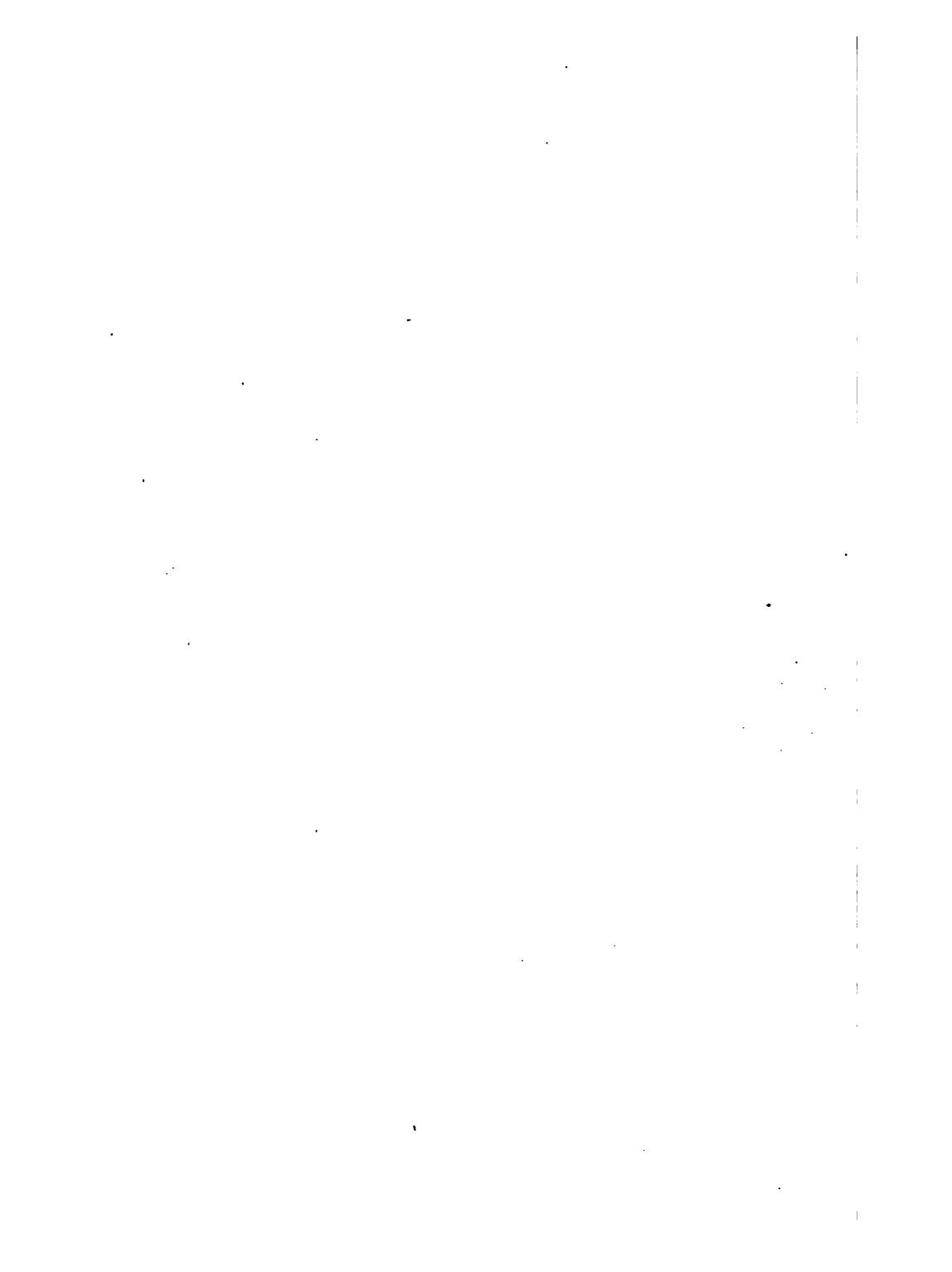
It is in these two particulars, the variety and human quality of song, of the western lark that leads the writer to rank him as the peer of all other song birds, and perhaps to put him at the head of the list. The mocking-bird's song is wonderfully beautiful, but, although not monotonous, is, it must be admitted, of an almost unvarying sameness; while that of the western lark, as the three examples above show, is notable for variety. The song of the nightingale, ranking above that of the mocking-bird, is still inferior to the western lark's range of expression, and his remarkable human timbre.

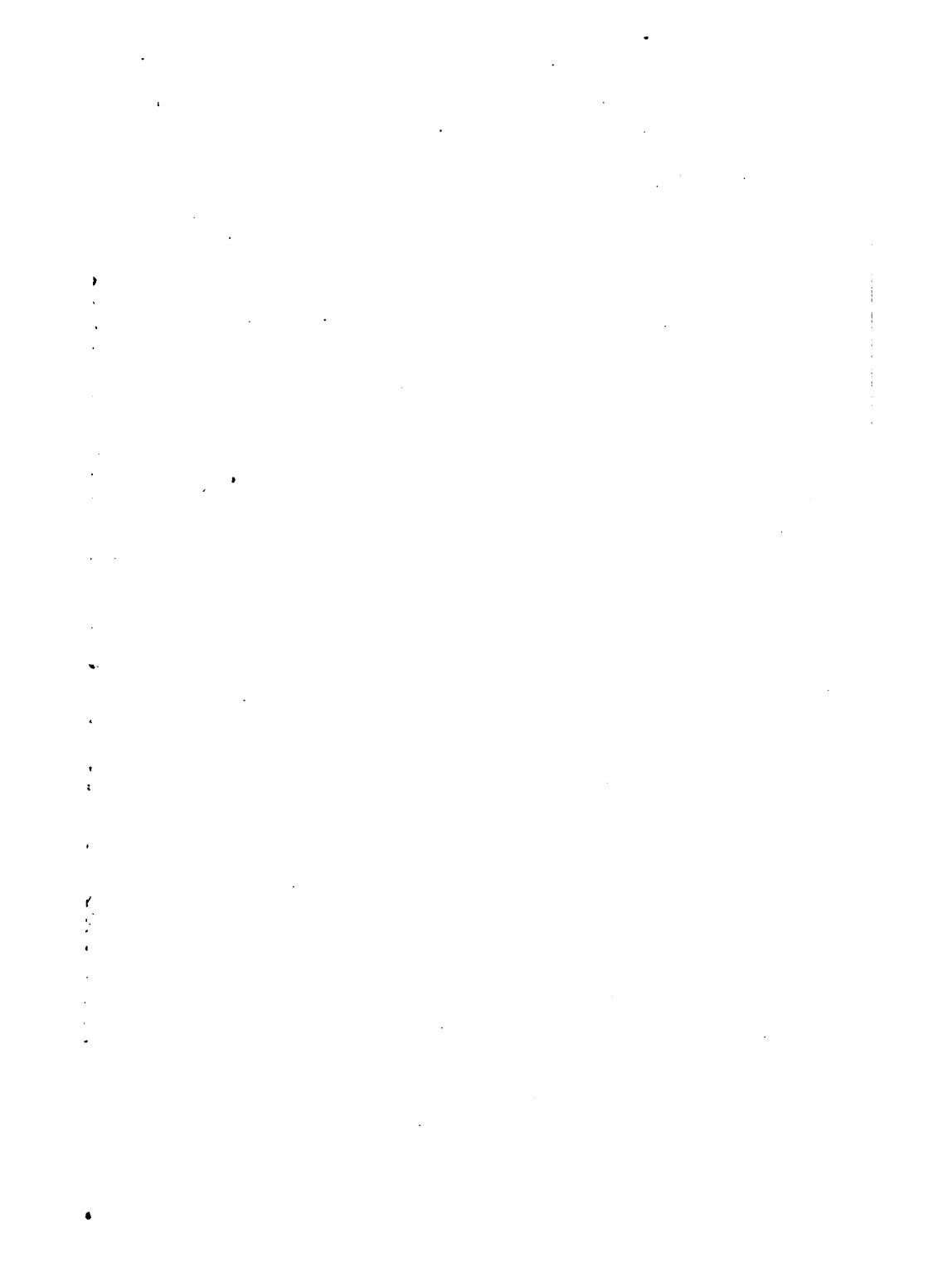
The writer does not intend to mention every bird having California for a habitat: it has been his purpose simply to note a few of the more familiar, those most likely to be seen and heard by the temporary visitor. But in closing, he wishes to write here—and he does this with distinct pleasure—the name of Mr. Barry R. Curtin, the young ornithologist, who, in the spring of 1909, when a mere lad of ten and a half years of age, exerted himself to such effect in the cause of the meadow lark that,

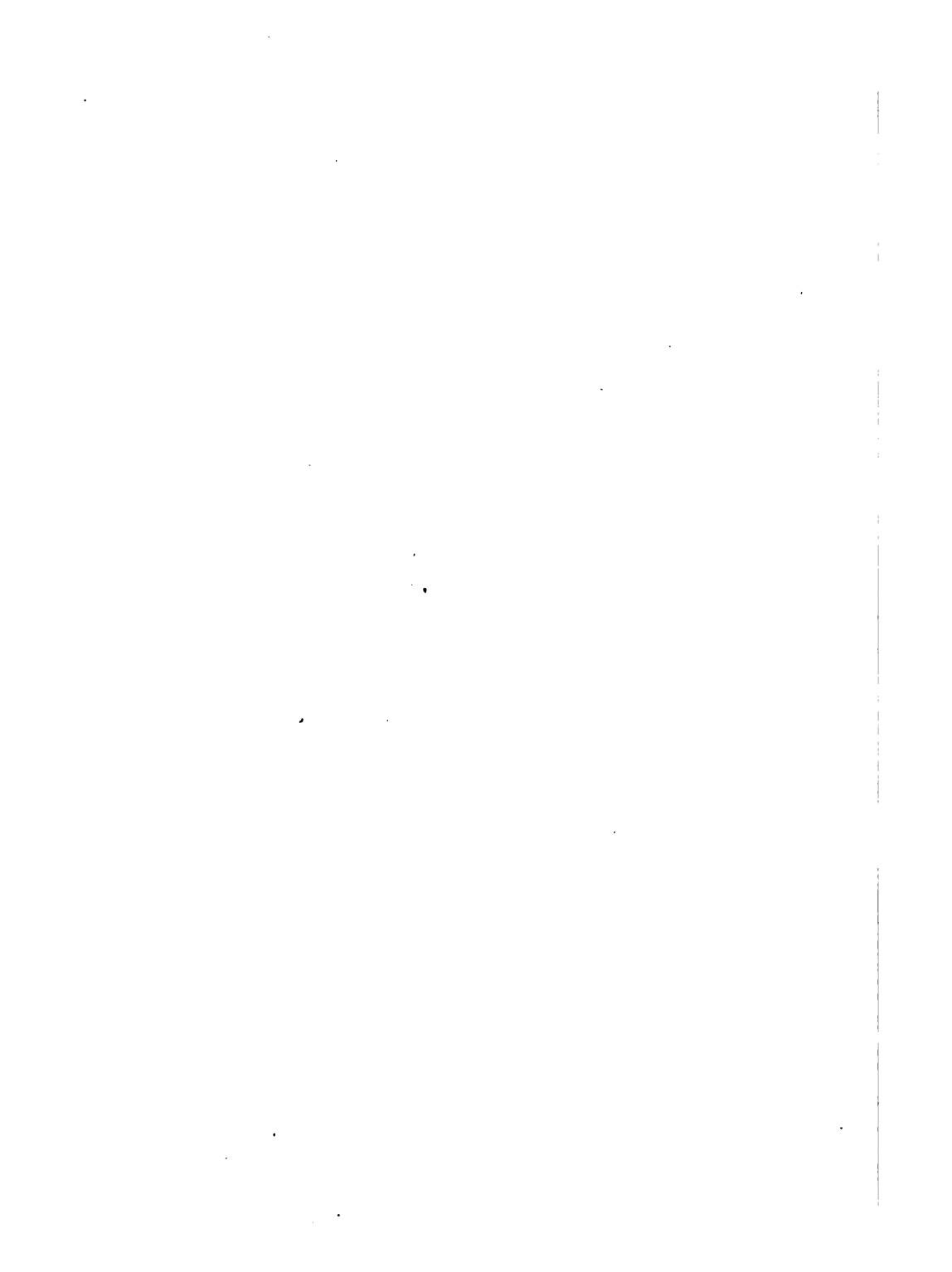
## The Nightingale's Peer

by general consent, he has been awarded the praise of being the chief influence in the defeat of the bill introduced into the California Legislature in the session of 1909, depriving this bird of the protection by law then in force. This bill, passing the House of Representatives, was defeated in the Senate by a small majority, mainly through data regarding the habits of the meadow lark furnished by Mr. Curtin to his father, Senator J. B. Curtin. Shortly after this the Audobon Society of California elected Mr. Curtin to honorary life membership, and he has been referred to in the press as "the boy who saved the meadow lark." The writer trusts Mr. Curtin will pardon this use of his name: the only excuse is that this incident became a matter of general knowledge, through the newspapers, at the time it occurred, and the sincere admiration felt for so thoughtful a deed in the interest of this lovable bird of the plain. Truly, California would lose a very large part of her charm were she deprived of her birds, whether songsters or not; and every bird lover is glad to know that now these feathered denizens of the state are protected by law.

OCTOBER, 1910.







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